



September 29, 2020

STATEMENT

Donna Duncan, CEO of the Ontario Long Term Care Association (OLTCA), released the following statement related to the Ontario Government announcement on wave 2 preparedness in long-term care:

"Today's announcement by the Ontario Government is a welcomed commitment to the province's long-term care homes on the frontlines of the fight against COVID-19. With increasing cases across the province, these measures will be critical to ensuring the safety of our most vulnerable seniors. We thank Premier Ford, Minister Fullerton and the Cabinet for taking this important step forward. We have a lot of work to do, and now is the time to act to advance these measures boldly and with urgency.

Since the spring, the OLTCA [has been clear](#) with the Ontario Government and other stakeholders about the challenges Ontario's long-term care homes face, and what is required to keep them stabilized through a second wave of this global pandemic. Today's commitment of personal protective equipment, minor capital investments and infection prevention and control resources will begin to address some of the existing gaps in the system. We look forward to working with government and health and emergency services partners to deploy these supports as quickly as possible and to address the outstanding system needs.

Long-term care staffing is in crisis. Ensuring the health and safety of our residents and staff in our homes is critical to our ability to recruit and retain a new work force in long-term care homes. These measures will help us in our recruiting efforts. We need to recruit an army of employees for long-term care. The OLTCA is grateful for Premier Ford's plea for the public to join our long-term care workforce. Today's measures, combined with yesterday's announcement to accelerate the training and education of health care professionals, are important steps in building the foundation for our recruitment. No matter the measure, without enough staff, limited progress can be made.

The recent escalation in cases and strains of the testing system demonstrates the need for us – long-term care homes, health system partners and government – to stay vigilant and move swiftly to ensure supports are in place to prevent and contain COVID-19 in our communities and our homes. Long-term care homes are as strong as the communities that support them. We cannot do this alone, and it will take all of us following public health protocols to hold onto our progress."