

Ontario Election 2022

Looking for answers about the people who care for older adults

April 8, 2022

People have spoken. More than 90% of older Ontarians want to grow older in their own homes and communities. They need help to make that happen. Most of this help comes from the personal support workers who work in home care and community services. Additional help comes from family members, neighbours, and friends - caregivers who aren't paid for what they do.

Here's what we know.

- ***There aren't enough personal support workers, particularly in the community.*** In 2021, vacant positions had increased 331% since 2020, with more than 14% of positions unfilled.
- ***Workers in home and community care are the lowest paid in the health care system.*** They have the same training and skills, but on average, they make 19% less than those working in hospitals and 9% less than those in long-term care homes. That difference amounts to at least \$5 per hour. Over a year, \$5 per hour adds up.
- ***Many find the low pay and poor working conditions too much to handle, so they leave for jobs that pay better.*** Some leave the profession. There is a shortage, and that shortage is growing.
- ***The current proposed hourly wage increases aren't enough.*** Adding a few dollars still doesn't give personal support workers a living wage. Also, giving the same increase to all personal support workers means those in the community continue to earn less than those in hospitals and long-term care homes.
- ***Unpaid caregivers provide about 70% of home care,*** often at a cost to their own health and finances.

What will parties do to attract and keep community-based personal support workers?

What is their plan for giving community-based personal support workers the same wages and benefits as those in hospitals and long-term care?

How will they support unpaid caregivers in homes and communities?

Here's what we need to know.

We need to know what candidates and parties are going to do about the shortage of workers in home and community services. Here are some questions you can ask them.

- ***What is your plan for attracting community-based personal support workers?*** What is your timeline for carrying out the plan?
- ***Once they are hired, how will you encourage them to stay*** in the profession and keep them working in the community?
- ***What is your plan for giving personal support workers in the community the same wages and benefits as those in hospitals and long-term care homes?*** What is your timeline for getting it done?
- ***What is your plan for supporting unpaid caregivers in homes and communities?*** How will you help them care for themselves so they can care for others?

Ask, think, and then vote!

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