Public Inquiry – Elisabeth Wetlaufer – Summary of Report – by Elaine Shantz CEO

On July 31st the Honourable Eileen E. Gillese released the much- awaited Long Term Care Homes Public Inquiry Report. Know doubt you have heard news broadcasts and interviews providing some of the details from a Media perspective. The following is a summary that will hopefully shed light from an operators’ perspective, it has been taken from two debriefing sessions I attended (OLTCA and Advantage).

The Inquiry Report lists 91 specific recommendations for long-term care operators, the Ministry of Long-Term Care, the Office of the Coroner and the Forensic Pathology Service, the College of Nurses, home care service providers, and the home care system (LHINs or replacement). The purpose report recommendations is to improve resident care and safety. The report itself is 4 volumes/1500 pages. From my perspective the recommendations are comprehensive and thoughtful.

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| As operators we were pleased to see the following included:   * The Ministry must play an expanded leadership role beyond its existing role of compliance and enforcement. The Commissioner recommends establishing a dedicated unit to support LTC homes in achieving regulatory compliance, and identifying and sharing best practices; providing bridging and laddering to LTC homes; and encouraging innovation and the use of new technologies. * The Ministry must expand the parameters of the nursing and personal care funding envelope to permit long-term care homes the flexibility to use these funds to pay for a broader spectrum of staff, including porters, pharmacists, and pharmacy technicians. * The Ministry should conduct a study to determine adequate levels of registered staff in LTC homes by July 31, 2020. If the study shows that additional staffing is required for resident safety, the Commissioner recommends that LTC homes receive a higher level of funding overall, with additional funds to be placed in the nursing and personal care envelope. The Ministry should create a new, permanent funding envelope for LTC homes to fund training, education, and professional development for all those providing care to residents in LTC homes. * The Ministry should encourage, recognize, and financially reward long-term care homes that have demonstrated improvements in the wellness and quality of life of their residents. * The Ministry should refine its QIP performance assessment to better identify struggling homes and to give more weight to findings of non-compliance related to high-risk areas. * The Ministry should establish a three-year grant program to strengthen medication management systems. The amounts, ranging from $50,000-$200,000 over the three-year period, would be based on size of the home. The report makes a number of suggestions, but is not prescriptive and recognizes that one size does not fit all. * Require the College of Nurses of Ontario to strengthen its intake investigation process following termination of nurses and take steps to improve reporting by long term care homes by educating them on mandatory reporting requirements and enhance reporting requirements.   As Operators we were disappointed with a few key gaps.   * Specifically, the lack of staffing in LTC is not sufficiently addressed. The Commissioner is calling for the Ministry to conduct a study, by next summer, to determine adequate levels of registered staff in LTC to ensure resident safety. We feel that past reports have already demonstrated this need. A further study could delay increased staff funding until at least 2021. We also note that the focus is only on registered staff, which does not address the PSW staff shortage. * The report did not include recommendations on labour relations, including the handling of grievances and discipline.      |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | OLTCA | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | The Commissioner was very clear that there were no findings of individual or organizational misconduct. She also highlighted that “although the long-term care system is grappling with serious challenges, it is far from broken.”  Justice Gillese said that hard copies will be sent to all LTC homes next week. | | | OLTCA | | |

Note: the above will be included in this month’s Board report.