

# Long-Term Care Services at Home

Supporting vulnerable populations through COVID-19 and beyond



Canadian  
Home Care  
Association

# About the CHCA

The Canadian Home Care Association (CHCA) is a national non-profit membership association dedicated to advancing innovation in home and community care.

Since 1990, the CHCA has been advocating for integrated community-based services that are patient-and family-centred, accessible, accountable, evidence-informed, and sustainable.

CHCA members include governments, administrators, service providers and suppliers involved in home and community care.

## Current Trends

# Overuse of Facility-Based Long-Term Care

**93%** of seniors live at home and **want to stay at home** for as long as possible

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**12% more** Canadian seniors (aged 80+) with long-term care needs **live in facilities** compared to Switzerland, US, New Zealand, Germany and Denmark.

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**1 in 9** newly admitted residents to LTC facilities **could have been cared for at home**

**Long-term care services** include health and supportive care for individuals who have a significant loss of physical and mental capacity. They help people maintain a level of functional ability consistent with their basic rights, fundamental freedoms and human dignity. (WHO, 2020).

Long-term care services are provided in care facilities (e.g. nursing home) or home settings (e.g. residence, retirement community).



### COVID-19 IMPACT

- Higher deaths
- Greater infection rates
- Isolation and neglect
- Restricted access to family caregivers

## Current Trends

# Under-resourced home-based long-term care

**Workforce shortages**, poor pay, working conditions effect a labour market made up of 90% female immigrants

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**Lack of monitoring systems** impacts accountability

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**Inconsistent access** to primary care and palliative care influences quality

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Only **3.4%** of public health care **funding** on home-based care limits resources

**Home-based long-term care** services include **health care** (nursing, rehabilitation) and **supportive care** (personal hygiene, toileting, meals, cleaning, medications) and **caregiver support**.

Home-based long-term care is delivered in a persons' home, a retirement community or other community setting through publicly funded **home care programs**.

### COVID-19 IMPACT

- Sudden service loss and limitations
- Lack of PPE
- HR shortages
- No tracking or reporting

## Current Trends

# Reliance on caregivers and insufficient support

**96%** of seniors receiving home-based long-term care have a caregiver who provides 80% of the care

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35% of working Canadians are **juggling work and care** responsibilities impacting employment and productivity

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Caregivers experience extreme stress, **poor mental health** and financial issues

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**Caregiver burnout** doubles the likelihood of a frail senior admitted to a long-term care facility

A **caregiver** (family caregiver or carer) is a person who takes on an unpaid caring role for someone who needs help because of a physical or cognitive condition, an injury, or a chronic life-limiting illness. (Carers Canada)

13 million Canadians, have provided care to a family member or friend with a long-term health condition, disability, or aging needs (Stats Canada, 2012)

### COVID-19 IMPACT

- Physical burnout
- Stress and mental health issues
- Financial concerns
- Lack of access to supports

# Vision for home-based long-term care

Home-based long-term care services are an essential part of an integrated system that delivers patient- and family-centred health and supportive care for older adults living with frailty; those with complex, chronic disabling conditions; and individuals at the end of life.

All Canadians with long-term care needs will have:

- Access to the care they need to delay and/or prevent admission to long-term care facilities
- Services provided by a team of qualified health care providers
- Caregivers recognized and supported as partners in care
- Health care wishes understood, respected, and acted upon

# Our Recommendations



**Review and expand existing home care commitments** in the 2016-17 F/P/T health accords in light of our experiences in the first wave of COVID-19.



**Improve health care workers' resilience** and ability to cope with uncertainty through new competency-based curriculum, continuing educational programs and online learning.



**Accelerate transfer payment commitments** (\$6.0 billion over 10 years beginning in 2017/18) to resource home care programs in anticipation of the next waves of the global pandemic and increased demand.



**Create national caregiver legislation** that recognizes caregivers and their essential role in the health and social care system.

# Immediate Actions

## *COVID-19 preparation and response for home-based long-term care services*

- ① **Ring-fence Canada Health Transfer funding for home-based long-term care**  
Provide more home-based long-term care as a safe and effective alternative to facility-based care
  - Between March and June 2020, infection rates in a home setting due to COVID-19 were 0.04%, with no COVID-related deaths to date.
- ② **Facilitate priority access to Personal Protective Equipment and user guides**  
Access to and use of appropriate PPE for providers and caregivers
  - Beginning in April, 70% of home health care providers experienced a critical shortage of PPE
- ③ **Share leading practices used to manage human resources through COVID-19 wave 1**  
Strategies and actions to redeploy staff, recruit and train staff, and communicate to staff
  - 25-30% of staff booked off work through COVID-19
- ④ **Streamline access to home-based palliative care medications**  
Convene a panel to evaluate impact of the NAPRA (National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities) standards for compounding and managing drugs on patients receiving care in their homes.
  - Palliative patients are experiencing delays in accessing drugs, prohibitive costs, unplanned hospital stays



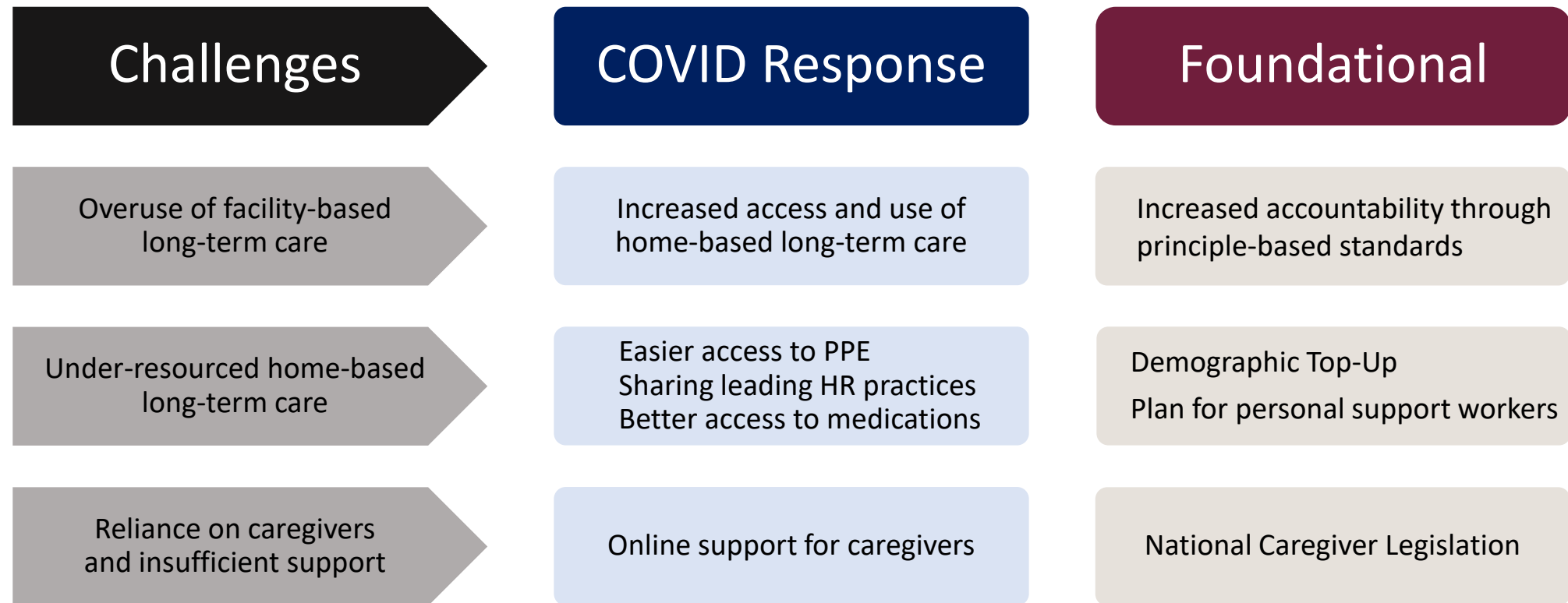
# Foundational Actions

## *Sustainable long-term care services*

- ① **Create principle-based standards for home and community care**
  - Build on Harmonized Principles for Home and Community Care to establish consistency and accountability
- ② **Develop a human resource plan for non-regulated personal care providers**
  - Cost-benefit review of pay equity based on education, qualification and experience, not setting of care
  - National consistency in job classification, title, qualifications and scope of practice
  - Promotion campaign profiling long-term care profession
- ③ **Introduce national caregiver legislation**
  - Define and strengthen caregiver rights and recognition
- ④ **Apply a “demographic top up” on the Canada Health Transfer**
  - Address the ongoing health and supportive care needs of the ageing population

# Summary

**Investment in home-based long-term care** will address the health and supportive care needs of older adults living with frailty; those with complex, chronic disabling conditions and individuals at the end-of-life.



# Summary

Home care is an essential part of an integrated health care system, yet demand for services has outpaced government funding resulting in rationing of services and increased unmet needs.

Through partnering with CHCA the federal government can ensure that appropriate investments are made in home care infrastructure, HHR, and caregivers to ensure our home care sector can support Canada's senior through COVID-19, future crises and for decades to come.