

Canadians deserve high-quality care, but non-profit hiring crisis is standing in the way ^[1]

Failure to invest in fair and equitable wages for all front-line care workers is a costly mistake. Those who are most vulnerable will bear the brunt.

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EXCERPTS:

We've all heard about the crisis in health care, but what most Canadians don't know is that this crisis is being driven, in part, by an unprecedented labour crisis in our non-profit community care sector.

Ontario government policy is not helping.

Child-care workers, personal support workers (PSWs), attendants/aids, mental health and addictions staff (to name a few) receive vastly different wages in the province's public, non-profit and for-profit sectors — even when they are funded by the same government program and have the same job, responsibilities and qualifications.

Non-profit wages are the lowest, even though community care is cost efficient, often provides higher quality and is more in-demand. Without enough non-profit workers, closures and reductions in community care services across the province will continue, directly impacting care to our loved ones.

Ontarians rely on non-profit community care every day. Vital services like supports for people with developmental disabilities, immigrants and refugees, drop-in and homeless shelters are part of the province's care infrastructure. All of these services are funded by government and delivered in various splits between the public, non-profit and for-profit sectors. But the playing field is unequal.

Community based non-profits are not given the funds to provide salaries on par with municipalities, schools boards and hospitals. Nor does the government allow them the same flexibility of setting salaries they permit for-profit providers delivering the same service.

One significant example is Bill 124, which restricts non-profits to increase wages by only 1 per cent. For-profit providers are not restricted under this bill.

PSWs in the home and community care sector make about 21 per cent less than those in hospitals and 17 per cent less than those in long-term care. Drop-in and shelter workers in non-profits have lower wages (\$15/hour) than those in municipal respite centres (\$30/hour).

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