



RESIDENTIAL AND
CIVIL
CONSTRUCTION
ALLIANCE OF
ONTARIO

RCCAO Constructing Ontario's Future

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February 14, 2020

The Honourable Christine Elliott
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health
777 Bay St., 5th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

and

The Honourable Merrilee Fullerton
Minister of Long-Term Care
400 University Ave., 6th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 1N3

Dear Deputy Premier and Minister:

The Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO) is pleased to present to you a report prepared by former Deputy Minister Michael Fenn entitled **R to Cure Hallway Medicine: Building Targeted Housing for Ontario's Seniors**. RCCAO is composed of management and labour groups, with a focus on infrastructure advocacy. This report stems from an idea RCCAO's Chair Phil Rubinoff has promoted to address the pressures on healthcare facilities by constructing community-based housing around hospitals.

As your ministry already recognizes, meeting future healthcare demands by increasing the supply of hospital beds is both cost prohibitive and misguided, especially in the context of an aging society. Hospital overcrowding is caused in part by patients who are recovering from surgery or other medical treatment, or being released from the emergency room, but have nowhere to safely go once discharged. Building seniors' accommodation to reduce the length and frequency of hospital stays is thus a primary objective.

As a coordinated, multi-ministry approach will be required to achieve successful outcomes, we have copied select Cabinet colleagues. For instance, adjusting land use planning and tax policies would be necessary to free up suitable land assets for seniors housing in our local communities.

Another way to ensure that seniors have more housing options would be to work with forward-looking private and public sector pension plans so that the retirement needs of Ontarians are more effectively met. A suite of tax credits and tax deductions, for example, will encourage seniors to relocate to more appropriate, eligible housing (the author cites the MURB tax credit program on p. 17 as a possible model to consider to kickstart this building).

If the four major recommendations contained in this report are acted upon, we are confident that Ontario can bend the curve on rising healthcare costs, while at the same time meet the needs of our population in better ways. The capital construction costs for hospital expenditures will be reduced considerably if Ontario commits to building or expanding hospitals only for key purposes such as advanced treatment, complex surgery and medical research.

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A range of solutions will be necessary, including a shift to specialized facilities and a greater reliance on remote monitoring devices. This must be complemented, however, by housing where seniors can access the healthcare system in different and more integrated ways.

We look forward to discussing the report's recommendations with you in greater detail. I can be reached at manahan@rccao.com or 905 760-7777 x.104.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AM', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Andy Manahan
Executive Director, RCCAO

Copy to:

Premier Doug Ford
Hon. Rod Phillips, Minister of Finance
Hon. Raymond Cho, Minister for Seniors and Accessibility
Hon. Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Hon. Laurie Scott, Minister of Infrastructure
Hon. Todd Smith, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services
Phil Rubinoff, Chair, RCCAO
Michael Fenn