

LONG TERM CARE & ELDER RIGHTS

This is a summary of the work undertaken by the National CFUW Long Term Care Study Group. It has been prepared by Isobel Boyle, member of the CFUW Perth and District Social Justice Committee.

This committee started in 2020 as an advocacy initiative to promote the rights and dignities of seniors, those in long-term care facilities, as well as personal support workers and nurses who care for vulnerable citizens. The COVID-19 exposed long-standing negligence and a lack of preparation in many Canadian long-term care (LTC) residences. Two years into the pandemic, Canada has the worst record in the world for COVID-related deaths in LTC homes.

Some facts:

- 43% of all deaths in Canada are linked to long term care
- 78% of Canadians want to “age in place”, only 26%
- Only 3 Canadian Provinces have a seniors advocate
- There are 2,076 LTC homes in Canada 46% publicly owned and 54% privately owned
- In 2020 alone, for profit LTC homes in Ontario account for 78% of LTC resident deaths
- Residents of LTC homes are primarily women, many of whom racialized and/or newcomers

The development of National standards ward related to a 2020 National CFUW resolution and in 2021 the federal government funded the health Standards Organization to develop National Long-Term Services Standard. The draft standard was released in January 2022 and is currently under internal review based on the publics feedback. While encouraging, there are a number of missing pieces.

In addition, this committee is:

- advocating to have LTC placed under the Canada Health Act
- attempting to tract Canada Health Transfer payments. In 2021 the safe Long-term Care Fund was established and gave \$1 billion to help provinces and territories protect people from COVID 19 in LTC settings in improve infection prevention and control.
- Holding an annual National day: Continuum of care for Elder Rights & Long-Term Care. The activities on May 4th advocates from across the country mobilized to urge all levels of government to take decisive action in protecting our most vulnerable populations in LTC and promoting the rights of elders in Canada. CFUW Clubs from across Canada for the past 2 years collaborated with other senior’s groups in their communities to gather information, to educate their communities and lobby elected officials. A toolkit has been developed to assist clubs in their efforts.

This information has been gathered from my participation on the National study group, (although I no longer sit on this committee) activity in my previous community and from the National website. https://cfuadmin.org/take_action/elder-rights-long-term-care-justice-day-of-action/