



Media Release - Let's focus on the real changes needed in the long term care sector

MISSISSAUGA, ON – May 8, 2020 - We are seeing more and more media stories attempting to draw a link between the ownership model for long-term care and the passing of residents from COVID-19. There are many variables and factors that have played a part in why COVID-19 spread in some homes and not others, however objective data has not shown that ownership is one of them.

Preliminary analysis by the Ontario Long Term Care Association shows that most long-term care homes did not have any deaths resulting from COVID-19. According to the OLTC, 90% of municipally owned homes had no deaths, 85% of privately-owned homes had no deaths and 82% of not-for-profit homes had no deaths.

This focus on an issue that is not core to the challenges facing the system is becoming a distraction from discussions about the real reform needed in the sector. The impact of COVID-19 on residents in long-term care homes across the country has shocked many Canadians. We raised the alarm about the potential impact on long-term care, yet early planning focused on preparing hospitals, not long-term care homes, for a surge. Long-term care has not been, until recently, a high priority, and our most vulnerable citizens have paid a heavy price.

We need to close the prioritization gap between acute care (e.g. hospitals) and chronic care (long-term). For example, it was not until we reached this crisis that long-term care homes were prioritized for personal protective equipment (PPE). Even now, PPE in most provinces is only directed to long-term care homes after an outbreak. This is like delivering a smoke alarm to a home only after a fire has started.

While Revera has had PPE throughout the pandemic, this is because we are large enough to have a strategic sourcing team. Smaller operators do not have this opportunity, which is one reason we are founding members of Canadian Alliance to Protect and Equip Seniors Living ([CAPES](#)), is a newly launched volunteer-based initiative that sources, supplies and shares PPE across the seniors living sector in response to the urgent need during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Funding allocations for long-term care workers across both privately and publicly-owned homes are different than those for hospitals, which results in lower staffing and wage levels. Staff shortages fueled by fear and competition with acute care during the COVID-19 pandemic have been intensified by this issue. The majority of the long-term care homes, both privately and publicly-owned, participate in centralized negotiations with various unions, which determines wage rate and other benefits.

More investment is needed to refurbish and build long-term care infrastructure. Simply put, there aren't enough long-term care homes in Canada, and many of these homes are institutional and old. Aging homes were not designed to handle a pandemic, with ward-style

rooms, shared bathrooms and inadequate space to properly isolate infected residents. Operators are trying to build new facilities, yet the path is replete with bureaucratic hurdles in some provinces. At the same time, despite the shortage of inventory, long-term care development is currently ineligible for federal government infrastructure funding. Yet again, deprioritized. Private operators have been instrumental in raising capital for long-term care redevelopment.

Some Revera homes have suffered very serious outbreaks, and the hearts of our entire organization go out to the families and friends of the people we have lost to this tragic pandemic and the staff who cared for them.

We welcome a time when we can look back and reflect on these events with the benefit of hindsight. We look forward to working with governments, public health officials, sector partners, unions, residents, families and employees in a rigorous review of the pandemic and the lessons to be learned from it to improve the long term care sector.

Right now, our energy and resources are focused on the present - on containing the spread of this outbreak and protecting our residents and staff.

COVID-19 is a very aggressive virus and we are learning more and more about it every day. We continue to work with public health and infection control experts to understand the spread and contain it.

Since COVID-19 arrived in Canada, our collective understanding has evolved as have the medical directives and protocols under which our sector operates. We have learned that this is a virus that spreads quickly, can be passed on by those who are pre-symptomatic or asymptomatic (including healthcare workers and residents returning from hospital), and is most likely to affect older and health-compromised people, like our long term care residents.

We have also learned that the primary symptoms of cough, fever, shortness of breath are not always present, but atypical symptoms, such as runny nose, sore throat, muscle aches, vomiting, diarrhea and fatigue, are common. In our homes, that means we are now monitoring staff and residents twice daily for fever and any possible symptoms. We are conducting more rigorous cleaning and infection control measures. We are working with Public Health authorities to do testing on all our residents and staff, and we continue to be vigilant for any symptom, regardless of how minor, that might indicate the presence of COVID-19.

Canadian Institute for Health Information reports demonstrate Revera's quality of care

Revera's long term care homes have proven to have significantly improved the safety and quality of care over the past several years, according to Canadian Institute for Health Information, an independent, objective non-governmental body which collects and reviews data on the performance of all long term care operators in Ontario.

Health performance indicator reports from the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) demonstrate that the commitment of Revera’s long term care staff across Canada to delivering high standards of safety and quality care has produced solid results.

“We are pleased with the continuous improvement in clinical quality results that Revera’s Long Term Care team has achieved in recent years,” said Thomas Wellner, Revera’s President and Chief Executive Officer. “Our focus on quality, safety and innovation, as demonstrated by the objective measurements from CIHI is benefitting our residents.”

Over the past five years, Revera’s Clinical Care team has led a series of initiatives to improve the quality of resident care. In October 2017, Revera took the innovative step of hiring a Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Dr. Rhonda Collins, who is the first and only CMO in the senior living sector in Canada, and one of only a handful in North America.

Dr. Collins is currently playing a lead role in the fight against COVID-19 across the seniors care sector, as a member of the Ontario COVID-19 Action Provincial Table and as Board Member of the Ontario Long Term Care Clinicians, she has worked tirelessly to inform and shape the Ministry of Health’s evolving response to the pandemic.

Ontario Quality Performance Indicator Results

The Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) makes performance indicator data for all long term care operators publicly available at yourhealthsystem.cihi.ca/hsp. The most recent publicly available data covers the period from April 2018 to March 2019. CIHI collects data for six key performance indicators: Falls in the Last 30 Days, Worsened Pressure Ulcer, Potentially Inappropriate Use of Antipsychotics, Restraint Use, Experiencing Pain and Experiencing Worsened Pain.

CIHI collects data on key priority health indicators from all long term care homes in Canada, privately-owned, not-for-profit or municipally-owned.

In Ontario, Revera has realized better outcomes than the averages of all Ontario LTC homes and all Canadian homes and has sustained this success for two consecutive fiscal years: April 2018 – March 2019 and April 2017 – March 2018. [See table for fiscal 2018-19 outcomes].

CIHI Long Term Care Outcomes – fiscal 2018-2019			
Indicator	Revera ON Avg (%)	Ontario Avg (%)	Canada Avg (%)
% Residents on antipsychotics without diagnosis	16.7	19	20.7
Daily Physical Restraint	1.7	3.9	5.2
Falls in past 30 days	15.4	16.6	16.7
Worsening Pressure Ulcers	1.7	2.6	2.7
Experiencing Worsening Pain	7.4	9.7	10.1
Experiencing Pain	3.9	5.2	6.7

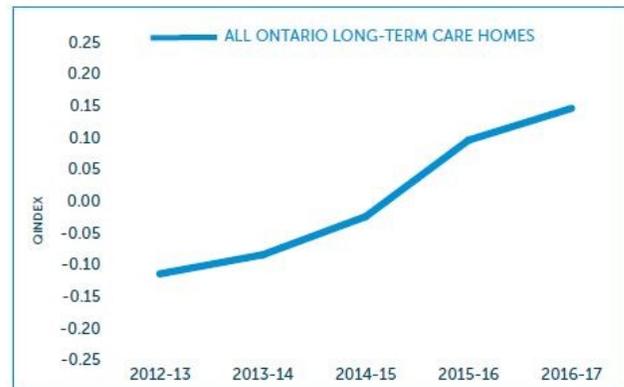
*Source: CIHI – yourhealthsystem.ca/hsp

Qindex

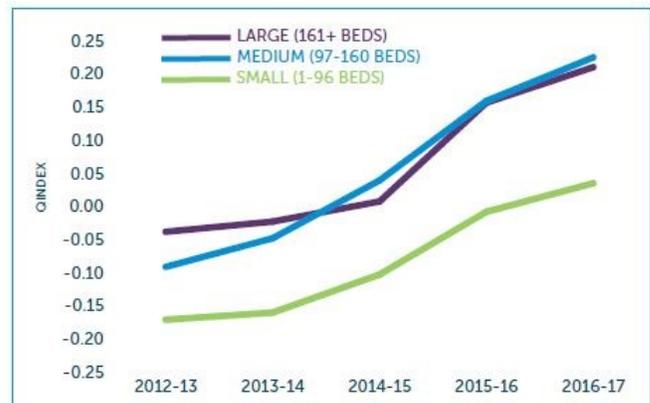
In September 2019, Longwood’s Healthcare Quarterly published a [paper](#) titled, *Overall Quality Performance in Long-Term Care Homes in Ontario*, which highlighted Qindex, a new way of analyzing CIHI data on key health indicators over a five year period, 2012-2017.

The [Qindex](#) is a composite of nine quality indicators that shows overall performance and trends of quality improvement in long-term care. The Qindex study was completed by University of Toronto researchers and staff of the Ontario Long Term Care Association ([OLTCA](#)).

The Qindex results showed that the overall quality performance of the long term care sector improved steadily over the five years.



One of the key findings was that there is no difference in quality between privately-owned and not-for-profit homes.



“The CIHI results for the past two years, and the historical sector quality indicators aggregated by the Qindex show that our sustained effort to improve clinical practices is producing measurable results,” said Wendy Gilmour, Senior Vice President, Long Term Care at Revera. “Our clinical leaders really focused on reducing falls, reducing antipsychotic prescriptions, and better management of pressure ulcers and we have produced results that have had a positive impact on our residents.”

“We know that our employees deliver clinical excellence and compassionate care to residents every day, but the COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that there is more work to be done to improve the quality and safety of the care we provide,” said Thomas Wellner. “We want to assure our residents and their families that we are committed to offering them and their loved ones very best care possible.”

“Looking forward,” added Wellner, “we are committed to work with all levels of government to ensure we improve the long term care system for our residents and our employees. We know that our government leaders are committed to reform and we are committed to working with them to deliver a better system for all.”

About Revera

Revera is a leading Canadian-owned and -headquartered, owner, investor, developer and operator in the senior living sector. Through its portfolio of partnerships, Revera owns or operates more than 500 properties across Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom serving more than 55,000 seniors. The company offers seniors’ apartments, independent living, assisted living, memory care, and long term care. With approximately 50,000 employees dedicated to providing exceptional care and service, Revera is helping seniors live life to the fullest. Through [Age is More](#), Revera is committed to challenging ageism, the company’s social cause of choice. Find out more at [ReveraLiving.com](#), [Facebook.com/ReveraInc](#) or on Twitter [@Revera Inc.](#)

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