

Written Submission: Pre-Budget Consultations in Advance of the 2021 Federal Budget



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Submitted by Good Samaritan Society/Good Samaritan Canada

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Recommendations:

Good Samaritan Canada and Good Samaritan Society recommends that the Government of Canada:

1. *Invest \$100M over five (5) years to train 300,000 health care workers (including Management) nationwide, to support the currently aging workforce while increasing standards of care; Funding needs to also be provided directly to operators to support the ongoing education and development of the workforce including but not limited to skill enhancement in infection prevention and control, wound care, falls management, MDS interrai assessments, medication management, dementia care etc.*
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3. *Allow non-government care providers and seniors housing operators access to federal funding to revitalize or replace existing Seniors Care Infrastructure, in need of critical upgrades as evidenced by Covid-19, through the National Housing Strategy;*
4. *Provide funding to non-profit care and seniors housing operators such as Good Samaritan Society and Good Samaritan Canada, to engage with members of community, subject matter experts, sectoral leaders, and relevant stakeholders to determine the needs of the communities we serve.*
5. *Provide funding to non-profit care and seniors housing operators such as Good Samaritan Society and Good Samaritan Canada to research and explore innovative and sustainable strategies and/or care models domestically and internationally that will meet the future needs of Canadians.*

The Good Samaritan Society (GSS) and Good Samaritan Canada are leading faith-based, not-for-profit, registered charities in Western Canada that provide quality accommodations, health, and community care services and programs to aging individuals in need. With over 70 years of experience providing specialized health and community care services in innovative and caring environments, our operational effectiveness and overarching culture of service and care make us the provider of choice for individuals and their families seeking a supportive place to call home.

Presently, we have over 4,100 employees and more than 1,900 volunteers who, in the spirit of compassion, serve over 5,000 residents and clients. As one of the largest not-for-profit care providers in Alberta (21 locations) and British Columbia (8 locations), we provide safe, comfortable communities inspiring involvement, where people can experience a sense of caring, belonging and purpose.

We strive to be leaders in the industry and make GSS/GSC the home of choice in the communities we serve. To achieve this, we have mandated that 95 cents of every dollar spent goes towards direct frontline care and services. This enables us to be an efficient and effective organization that can provide quality care and quality accommodations.

We are also proud to be a partner in the Comprehensive Home Option of Integrated Care for the Elderly (CHOICE©) program, which was developed in 1996 and was the first program of its kind in Canada. Currently, there are four CHOICE© programs operating in the Edmonton region, and two are offered by GSS at the Dr. Gerald Zetter Centre and Good Samaritan Place. CHOICE© provides seniors with complex medical conditions the advantage of living at home while utilizing the support services made available at the sites. For example, physician care, rehabilitation services, medications and pharmacist consultants, recreation and socialization, etc.

Another way that we are committed to helping people lead more independent lives is through our Seniors' Clinic. Located at our Head Office, the Clinic helps seniors with complex health issues by providing primary health care or partnering with a family physician. The Clinic is devoted to seniors, and the medical team includes physicians with training in caring for seniors, nurses with advanced training in geriatrics, a pharmacist, and a physiotherapist.

As Canada's population and healthcare workforce ages, it is imperative that we focus on identification and implementation of innovative solutions in order to ensure the appropriate levels of care can be there for Canadians.

There is widespread agreement amongst industry and government officials that there is a national health human resources crisis that requires federal leadership and intervention to support the Provinces and Territories. It has long been said that the Federal Government needs to revisit immigration policies in order to facilitate Internationally trained healthcare workers into our workforce.

Given the consequences of Covid-19 which has led to increased unemployment, the Federal Government has an opportunity to work with Provinces, Industry and Providers such as Good Samaritan Society and Good Samaritan Canada to explore opportunities for practical training and employment in the care sector. With support from the Federal Government, Tens of thousands of Canadians could find themselves in meaningful recession free employment in the health care sector, nationwide.

Good Samaritan Society and Good Samaritan Canada, inspire to provide quality care, creating meaningful relationships, within hospitable environments. Much work needs to be done nationally to improve the standards of care and the living environments for the clients we serve. It is our hope, that the Federal Government will support such initiatives to improve the quality and safety of our environments for our clients, their families, and our staff.

Recommendation 1: Investments in labour force recruitment

1. *Invest \$100M over five (5) years to train 300,000 health care workers (including Management) nationwide, to support the currently aging workforce while increasing standards of care;*

The Challenge: Prior to COVID-19, it was estimated that Canada would need almost 180,000 new Personal Support Workers (PSWs) over the next ten years, just to meet increased demand from our aging population. With governments now committing to enhanced quality of care in these facilities, the workforce will need to grow even more.

The Solution: GSS recommends that the Federal Government invest substantial dollars towards training or upgrading the skills of health care aides, licensed practical nurses, registered nurses, recreation assistants and therapists, physical therapists, maintenance and support workers, as well as health care management.

Recommendation 2: Investments in much-needed upgrades to long-term care infrastructure

Allow non-government care providers and seniors housing operators access to federal funding to revitalize or replace existing Seniors Care Infrastructure, in need of critical upgrades as evidenced by Covid-19, through the National Housing Strategy;

The Challenge: The pandemic amply proved it is difficult to contain the spread of infection in decades-old long-term care homes with outdated ventilation systems; three- and four-bed wards; shared washrooms and bathing areas; communal dining rooms and narrow hallways; and small, crowded nursing stations and medication areas.

The Solution: By allowing non-government care providers the ability to access capital, the Government of Canada would facilitate the refurbishment or replacement of aging and unsafe LTC infrastructure. By providing affordable financing to private operators, and grants for not-for-profit facilities, the Federal Government will be able to raise the standards of care.

Recommendation 3: Support Non-Profit Organizations to engage with the communities they serve,

Provide funding to non-profit care and seniors housing operators such as Good Samaritan Society and Good Samaritan Canada, to engage with members of community, subject matter experts, sectoral leaders, and relevant stakeholders to determine the needs of the communities we serve. This will help guide discussions at the Provincial and Federal level aimed at improving standards nationally, while enabling operators to identify issues and concerns and implement immediate solutions.

The Challenge: COVID-19 cases and outcomes in Canada's long-term care facilities varied significantly among provinces and territories. For example, as of May 25, Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and the territories had no reported deaths in retirement homes and LTC facilities, whereas LTC deaths represented over 70% of all COVID-19 deaths in Quebec, Ontario and Alberta and 97% of all deaths in Nova Scotia.² This inconsistency in care is incongruent with principles of Canadian healthcare.

The Solution: The federal government must support meaningful community engagement to be undertaken consistently in order to better prepare community based organizations to respond to opportunities and threats that affect their stakeholders.

Recommendation 4: Investing in Innovative and Sustainable Strategies and Care Models.

Provide funding to non-profit care and seniors housing operators such as Good Samaritan Society and Good Samaritan Canada to research and explore innovative and sustainable strategies and/or care models domestically and internationally that will meet the future needs of Canadians.

The Challenge: Much has been said about the Hogewey Dementia Village in Netherlands, or the Butterfly Model in UK, or the Niverville Care Hub in Manitoba. The CHOICE program and Seniors Clinics have been proven to work in Alberta, however can other urban and rural communities across Canada benefit from these and/or other models being implemented, in order to meet community needs while ensuring sustainability.

The Solution: GSS/GSC is calling on the government to support initiatives for non-profit organizations to research and implement innovative care practices or programs, or care models that will meet the needs of Canadians now and in the future.

² *Pandemic Experience in the Long-Term Care Sector: How Does Canada Compare With Other Countries?* Canadian Institute for Health Information. <https://www.cihi.ca/sites/default/files/document/covid-19-rapid-response-long-term-care-snapshot-en.pdf>