

## **Written Submission for the Pre-Budget Consultations in Advance of the Upcoming Federal Budget**

**Date:** August 7, 2020

**Submitted by:** Bayshore HealthCare Ltd.

**List of Recommendations:**

1. In order to meet the demand by Canadians for a robust home care sector, the federal government will need to invest in training programs inclusive of free tuition and paid training time for students to be attracted to enter the home care sector. An investment of \$66M would be required as a training fund for up to 10,000 students applying as a Certified Supportive Care Worker, Home Support Worker, or Personal Support Worker.

## **Background:**

On June 12, 2020, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance launched its pre-budget consultations process and invited Canadians to participate. Consultations will result in a report to be tabled in the House of Commons in December 2020, which will be considered by the Minister of Finance in preparation of the 2021 federal budget.

Bayshore HealthCare Ltd. is one of the country's leading providers of home and community health care services and is a Canadian-owned company. Bayshore HealthCare has been a recipient of Canada's Best Managed Companies award since 2006.

With over 100 locations across the country, including home care offices, pharmacies and infusion clinics, Bayshore has more than 13,500 staff members and provides care to over 350,000 clients. We are dedicated to enhancing the quality of life, dignity and independence of all Canadians, by providing customized care plans and solutions that allow clients to remain in the comfort of their own home.

**Recommendation 1: In order to meet the demand by Canadians for a robust home care sector, the federal government will need to invest in training programs inclusive of free tuition and paid training time for students to be attracted to enter the home care sector. An investment of \$66M would be required as a training fund for up to 10,000 students applying as a Certified Supportive Care Worker, Home Support Worker, or Personal Support Worker.**

We recommend training funds be flowed to home care sector employers to recruit and compensate students for completion of certificate programs.

With paid training during certificate program students who complete will be offered full-time employment for at least a one year period with onboarding support and peer-coaching which we believe will result in higher retention rates in the home care sector.

Bayshore HealthCare, as an example of a home care provider, is recommending creating a training program which would be funded by the federal government to create a new career development pathway for Personal Support Workers (PSW), and be able to offer an extremely high rate of meaningful employment. This new entry level position would be as a Supportive Care Worker (SCW). With the imminent end of the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), service providers and government partners need to develop new workforce development models to attract and retain a large number of home care workers urgently.

Financial support for paid training sessions could increase home care worker numbers and potentially enable the strategic deployment of SCWs to places where shortages are the most acute. Support could be provided to encourage new applicants to programs or to reimburse recent graduates in return for their commitment to provide service for one year after training.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has become increasingly clear that PSWs and other healthcare workers are increasingly essential. With Long-Term Care Homes taking a particularly hard hit during the pandemic, alternative solutions need to be considered for the care of seniors in our country. Seniors need to be taken care of in the safest setting possible. In Ontario, the number of COVID-19 related deaths in long-term care is over 1,200 compared to the home care sector which has had zero COVID-19 related deaths. Not only has home care offered a safer setting for patients, but for our employees as well. To date, in long-term care homes over 1,500 staff have tested COVID-19 positive. In home care, across four of the largest Service Providers, only 12 staff have tested positive for COVID-19.

Further, home care requires strong clinical leadership, use of evidence based practice guidelines and enabling policies and procedures to better support the level of care needed in patients' homes, where they want to be. In fact, according to a previous Canadian Caregiver Coalition Research Project, evidence indicates that people want to remain at home for as long as possible, and if given a choice would prefer early discharge from hospital followed by provision of home care.

Patient satisfaction levels were also found to be greatest for those receiving care in their own homes.

We also recommend offering a reformatted, part-time program which would allow people to work while completing their training, as many people are unable to stop working to take a full-time course.

The Supportive Care Worker training program, as an example of a new and innovative home care educational model, would consist of 400 hours of training 10-weeks of full-time training including 80 hours of a supervised clinical practicum at various Bayshore branches. Upon successful completion of the training program, Bayshore would offer the trainee an 8 week supervised internship program for transition into the workplace and a full-time position for up to three years. The Government's \$66M investment would then result in the creation of 10,000 jobs for Canadians in meaningful careers.