

Residents First: Long-Term Care Home Renewal

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care / Health Capital Investment Branch / Long-Term Care Redevelopment

A newsletter dedicated to the Enhanced Long-Term Care Home Renewal Strategy

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The Enhanced Long-Term Care Home Renewal Strategy: Your Input, Your Strategy!



Donna Fairley, Ontario Association of Residents' Councils, shares a laugh with Devora Greenspon at her home in North York

An Interview with Devora Greenspon, Long-Term Care Home Resident and Resident Advocate

(Devora lives in a home eligible for redevelopment under the Enhanced Long-Term Care Home Renewal Strategy)

When Devora Greenspon arrived at her new home a few years ago paralyzed from the waist down, her family had been told by medical advisors to get her affairs in order. It's quite obvious that those advising the family did not know anything about Devora – or those who would help nurse her back to health in the months ahead.

Devora was absolutely thrilled with the support she received from the personal support workers (PSWs) in the intense and comprehensive rehabilitation program that followed. Understanding that the relationship between staff and residents must be based on mutual respect, she

praised the treatment she received that got her back in shape.

Devora is a teacher by profession, and she graciously used her skills to share experiences and feedback with the ministry and its stakeholders regarding the Enhanced Long-Term Care Home Renewal Strategy (*Enhanced Strategy*.)

At 82 years of age, Devora is representative of many residents living in Long-Term Care (LTC) homes throughout the province, and she works tirelessly to ensure that their opinions are heard because their opinions matter.

When asked to summarize some of the key priorities LTC home operators should consider under redevelopment through the Enhanced Strategy, she quickly focused on physical space in the home.



Devora Greenspon attends a Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting at the ministry. Catherine Park and Peter Kaftarian, Health Capital Investment Branch, are in the foreground

When referring to physical space, Devora cited her own room as an example. “There isn’t enough space in the bedroom for two people to sit down, and more living space equals more privacy, and more dignity and respect for the residents,” she says. “After all, this is our home,” she added. “Privacy is so important to the residents and their families,” Devora stressed. “Whether it’s a conversation or a birthday party, the residents need to have time to interact with one another and their families in a private setting.”

She also highlighted that both activity and living spaces need to be larger, and in areas that don’t interfere with resident privacy. Ultimately, the sense of privacy makes

the home feel more like a home and not an institution. There have been significant design changes since Devora’s LTC home was built, and the new *Long-Term Care Home Design Manual 2015* addresses issues she raised regarding living spaces and what is defined as usable space in resident areas. She believes residents are experts through their lived experiences. “After all,” says Devora, “they are the ones doing the living!”

Devora also recalls palliative care rooms being available in some of the older LTC homes – something that is fairly uncommon today. She stated that having one such room per floor provides for respect and dignity of the resident and their families. Saying good bye in a private setting is important for both the living and the dying. As the ministry works with long-term care home stakeholders, ideas like Devora’s may be incorporated into concepts for the “Long-Term Care Home of the Future.”

“These are all pieces of the puzzle,” Devora stated. “Every decision made by the ministry or the operators affects the life of a resident. If they took a minute to walk a mile in my shoes, they might have a different perspective on living in a home,” she concluded. The Enhanced Strategy is ultimately geared to putting our Residents First, so that Devora’s shoes, and those of her fellow residents, will have many more miles under them.

Ministry-LHIN Roadshow – Check!

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (the ministry), together with the Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs), held Education Sessions (*the Roadshow*) in March and April for all eligible LTC home operators. Operators were provided with information regarding the *Enhanced Strategy*, an overview of the LTC home licensing process and key updates from the LHINs to support survey completion. The sessions were very successful, with an overwhelming 90 percent operator turnout. The ministry thanks operators for participating, and the LHINs for their support with organizing the sessions across the province.



Peter Kaftarian, Director Health Capital Investment Branch, speaks to operators at the Toronto Central LHIN Education Session