



Sam Oosterhoff
MPP, Niagara West-Glanbrook
Associate Critic for Research, Innovation and Science
Rm 328, Main Legislative Building
Queen's Park, Toronto, ON M7A 1A8

Note: This letter supports the draft private members bill related to palliative care in Ontario and not the views of Mr. Oosterhoff or the Ontario Conservative Party.

November 20, 2017

Dear Mr. Oosterhoff,

The Canadian Society of Palliative Care Physicians (CSPCP) is pleased to endorse your draft Private Member's bill, the Provincial Framework on Hospice Palliative Care Act. The draft bill mirrors the federal Private Members' Bill C-277, sponsored by Sarnia-Lambton MP Marilyn Gladu. The CSPCP strongly endorses Bill C-277 and any provincial legislation that echoes its important messages. The reasons for our support are as follows:

1. Our health care system does not equitably meet the needs of Canadians who are nearing the end of life and their families. Access to palliative care depends on where you live, how old you are, and what you are dying from.¹ Even within Ontario, there is vast variation in the availability of palliative care services. The Ontario Auditor General's December 2014 report describes this clearly. The gaps result in unnecessary and largely preventable suffering. Approval of your Private Members bill would ensure that Ontario sets standards for access to quality palliative care for all for all ages (including children), all geographies, and all diagnoses.
2. We know that the need for palliative care resources will only become greater as Canadians continue to age. For the first time in history, there are more seniors in Canada than children².

¹ National Palliative Medicine Survey conducted by the Canadian Society of Palliative Care Physicians, the Canadian Medical Association, the College of Family Physicians of Canada, the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, and the Canadian Frailty Network (formerly Technology Evaluation in the Elderly: <http://www.cspcp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/PM-Survey-Final-Report-EN.pdf> (Survey 2014; report 2015)

² Statistics Canada: Canada's population estimates: Age and sex, July 1, 2015 <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/150929/dq150929b-eng.htm>

By 2024, the aging will be even more pronounced: Canadians aged 65 years and older will account for more than 20 per cent of the population, while children under 15 years old will represent just over 16 per cent of all Canadians. Aging equates to higher demand.

3. All Canadians, including Ontarians, who have a grievous and irremediable medical condition have the right to seek Medical Assistance in Dying but they do not yet have the right to access palliative care. Approval of your Private Members bill would help to ensure that Canadians have options to reduce suffering at the end of life.
4. There are no standards for the provision of palliative care nationally or within Ontario; nor are there standards or for the education and credentials for health care providers who provide palliative care. Approval of your draft Private Members bill will ensure that standards and accountabilities are set so Ontarians can be assured of receiving quality palliative care from appropriately trained providers.
5. Data regarding access and quality of palliative care services is disjointed within Ontario and across the country. Key indicators need to be collected provincially and nationally as we do for other areas of health care. This will allow us to compare ourselves to similar jurisdictions and to monitor our progress as implementation unfolds.
6. Your Private Members bill will create supports for patients, families and caregivers including quality information about palliative care services, advance care planning tools, income support and job protection. All Ontarians will need these supports on one or more occasions in their lives. The information is applicable to all Canadians and should be shared through national resources that provide high quality, cost-effective, accessible information (such as Canadian Virtual Hospice).
7. Strategic investment in palliative care makes economic sense³. Evidence shows that it can:
 - a. Reduce the cost of delivering care
 - b. Free up scarce resources in acute care, such as beds in Intensive Care Units (ICUs), for patients who truly need them.
 - c. Improve the quality of life and quality of care of patients with serious illnesses and their families.

A great deal of work has already been done nationally and within some of the provinces. We encourage all provinces to commit to implementing frameworks that have already been agreed to by consensus. For example, The Way Forward⁴ framework was developed through an extensive multi-year, federally-funded project conducted by the Quality End of Life Care Coalition of Canada (QELCCC). The principles in the

³ Palliative care: A vital service with clear economic, health and social benefits. Canadian Society of Palliative Care Physicians, February 2017. <http://www.cspcp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Economics-of-Palliative-Care-Final-EN.pdf>

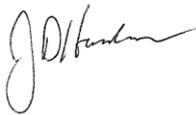
⁴ The Way Forward National Framework; a roadmap for an integrated palliative approach to care, Quality End of Life Care Coalition and CHPCA March 2015 <http://www.hpcintegration.ca/media/60044/TWF-framework-doc-Eng-2015-final-April1.pdf>

framework have not changed and they have been repeatedly endorsed by many organizations including our own. What we need now is a nimble, effective structure to **implement** the existing framework within every province.

The CSPCP has provided concrete steps for implementing The Way Forward in a November 2016 report: How to Improve Palliative Care in Canada: Call to Action for Federal, Provincial, Territorial, Regional, and Local Decision Makers⁵. The “Palliative Care Matters” national consensus report from December 2016 outlines similar recommendations.⁶ All of these align with the QELCCC’s Blueprint for Action 2010 to 2020.⁷ Other major reports call for similar changes, including a June 2005 report from the Senate of Canada⁸, The Canadian Medical Association’s Call to Action from 2015⁹, and the Canadian Cancer Society’s 2016 report Right to Care: Palliative Care for all Canadians¹⁰.

What we need now is to establish an effective framework for implementing what experts have already agreed to, within each province and across Canada. The need is great, it is growing, and it is urgent. Adoption of the Provincial Framework on Hospice Palliative Care Act would signal Ontario’s commitment to addressing the gaps, and it would set the stage for rapid implementation.

Sincerely,



Dr. J. David Henderson, President
Canadian Society of Palliative Care Physicians

About the Canadian Society of Palliative Care Physicians

The Vision of the Canadian Society of Palliative Care Physicians is to promote access to palliative care for all Canadians, through advocacy, partnerships, research, and physician education. Our membership consists of approximately 500 palliative care physicians and physicians with a special interest in palliative care -- including regional and local program leaders, educators, residency directors, clinicians, and palliative care residents.

www.cspcp.ca office@cspcp.ca @CSPCP_SCMSF

⁵ How to Improve Palliative Care in Canada: Call to Action for Federal, Provincial, Territorial, Regional and Local Decision Makers <http://www.cspcp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Full-Report-How-to-Improve-Palliative-Care-in-Canada-FINAL-Nov-2016.pdf>

⁶ Palliative Care Matters: Consensus Statement <http://www.palliativecarematters.ca/consensus-statement/>

⁷ http://www.qelccc.ca/media/3749/eng_progress_report_20102012-07-10_2.pdf

⁸ June 2005. Still Not There. Quality End-of-Life Care: A Progress Report senate of Canada. The hon. Sharon Carstairs, P.C. Author: http://www.chpca.net/media/7883/Still_Not_There_June_2005.pdf

⁹ Canadian Medical Association’s National Call to Action May 2016: examples of innovative care delivery models, training opportunities and physician leaders in palliative care. <https://www.cma.ca/Assets/assets-library/document/en/advocacy/palliative-care-report-online-e.pdf>

¹⁰ Canadian Cancer Society, 2016. <http://www.cancer.ca/~media/cancer.ca/CW/get%20involved/take%20action/Palliative-care-report-2016-EN.pdf?la=en>

Canadian Society of Palliative Care Physicians

Suite 584
1A – 12830 – 96 Avenue
Surrey, BC V3V 0C2
T: (604) 341-3174; F: (604) 583-0645