



May 9, 2019

Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade  
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**Update to Ontario Immigration Act Regulation 422/17: 19-MEDJCT002**

Home Care Ontario, *the voice of home care in Ontario*<sup>TM</sup>, appreciates the opportunity to comment in support of the above-referenced Regulatory Amendment.

Home care is a cornerstone of the province's health care system. Last year alone, more than 750,000 people received more than 39 million hours of publicly-funded home care in Ontario, and an estimated 150,000 people purchased an additional 20 million hours of care directly.

On behalf of my members, who provide this critical care across the province, I am pleased to write in support of updating the *Ontario Immigration Act, 2015*, to add "Home support workers and related occupations," such as Personal Support Workers (PSWs), to the list of prescribed occupations in the in-demand skills section of the act.

PSWs play a critical role in Ontario's health care system by assisting people with daily tasks they cannot do on their own due to injury, illness, age or disability. They ensure people can stay in their own homes as they age: helping them maintain their independence, freedom, and quality of life.

A properly functioning home care system is critical in providing people with the support they need to avoid an emergency or hospital admission and prevent hallway health care by helping acute-care discharge patients more quickly.

Today, however, there is a significant shortage of PSWs, and the health care system now faces a workforce crisis, and it is essential the government take steps to address this shortage of PSWs.

Home Care Ontario believes the proposed change will make a positive impact on this issue by increasing the number of people entering this critical profession and helping more patients get the high-quality treatment where they want it – in their own homes.

Recruiting and retaining more PSWs must be a key part of improving Ontario's health care system. Home Care Ontario looks forward to continuing to work with the government to implement additional positive changes to ensure we have enough PSWs to end hallway health care and provide overall better quality of care for patients.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan D. VanderBent". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Sue VanderBent  
CEO, Home Care Ontario