

# Addressing the PSW Shortage in Waterloo Wellington

## Background Information

As aligned with the WWLHIN's Integrated Health Service Plan, Home and Community Care services, including both personal support (PSW) and professional services (nursing and therapies), provide important services to over 800,000 residents in Waterloo Wellington.

Demand for personal support services has increased significantly since 2014 at an average of 9.4%, making it more important than ever that referrals are tracked and accepted to ensure the additional 400,000 required hours of PSW services are provided to those people living at home with independence or waiting on long-term care beds.

The issue of PSW capacity has become a major concern across the province of Ontario in various regions and extending beyond home and community care into the long-term care sector.

The WWLHIN is working hard to address the shortage for Waterloo Wellington. The obstacles surrounding the issue are complex and will take time to resolve, however, strategies are under development to rectify the issue for both the short and long term.

## Problem Solving

Included in the approach to tackle PSW capacity the WWLHIN has engaged a Management Consulting Service to work closely with each of the PSW providers in the region (Paramed, CarePartners, Closing the Gap, CBI, and Bayshore) to identify and implement solutions.

The project will be divided into two phases: Current State Analysis that will look at an environmental review and key informant interviews and Action Planning that will include recommendations for innovative solutions to PSW capacity challenges for the short, medium and long term.

Beginning in December 2017, the first phase will review the business models looking namely at: employment and compensation models, recruitment and retention, interplay between private versus publicly funded patients, and a review of Fee for Service payment models to identify any impact on PSW capacity.

While the research is completed and recommendations are made, two major objectives are being addressed:

## Create Net New Supply Of PSW's And Maximize Existing Capacity

### 1. Create Net New Supply of PSWs:

#### **Incentivising Untapped Workforce:**

- A significant number of PSW graduates do not enter the profession, incentivizing these people to enter the field could quickly supplement the existing supply of PSW's

#### **Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) and/or Upskilling:**

- PLA for internationally educated health professionals. PLSA and/or upskilling for health service workers and direct service workers. Special CPD training for PSW's.

#### **Supports Programs – Subsidized Training, Cost of Living, Child Care etc:**

- Financial supports with return of service commitments could increase PSW numbers and enable the strategic deployment of PSW's to places where shortages are the most acute.

#### **Revitalized Approach to Marketing the Profession:**

- A new marketing strategy is needed as traditional recruitment approaches are not working and programs are being cancelled due to lack of interest.

### 2. Maximize Existing Capacity

#### **Leverage workforce from Retirement Homes and Community Support Service Agencies:**

- Examine contracts with retirement homes and community support service agencies to determine if there is capacity within their workforces to provide personal support services.

## **Private Sector Resources**

- Look at private sector resources as a possible pool from which to draw

## **Window of Time Appointments**

- Window of time appointment model to give PSW's flexibility to manage appointments, while also responding to patient expectations about when care is being provided.

## **Engage Patients and Families on Time of Care needs**

- Changing service time needs (e.g., baths) could unlock windows of time when PSW's are available due to less demand. This could also potentially reduce the need for split shifts.

## **Design and Implementation of Innovative Personal Support Models of Care**

- to increase continuity of care and quality of care for patients while supporting a more efficient and rewarding work for PSWs.

## **Capacity Building Approach**

- The foundation of the strategies to address the PSW capacity issues is the Quadruple Aim:
- Improve patient experience
- Enhance quality of care
- Improve provider experience
- Increase operational efficiencies

## **Capacity Building Strategies - Home & Community Care**

As part of the capacity building strategies put forth by the team at the LHIN multiple initiatives have been developed and some have already been implemented:

### **1. NEW PSW Agency**

A new PSW agency "CBI/PACE" started in August of 2017

### **2. PSW Rate Harmonization**

Provincially implemented to support recruitment and retaining PSW's in the community.

### **3. PSW Escalation Calls**

Multiple community partners have come together two days a week for a teleconference to solve specific and immediate patient access issues.

### **4. Personal Support Neighbourhood Model**

Building on current cluster care practices, implementing a small neighbourhood model assigned to 1 PSW agency (Closing the Gap). The goal of this new model is to provide a better overall patient experience, while building a sustainable staffing model by attracting high quality PSW's and developing stronger relationships between patients and the PSW team. The new team-based care model will allow for dedicated teams to provide greater consistent care while increasing efficiency and allowing for more personal support worker care in the community.

### **5. PSW Interval Care Model**

The interval care model provides a "team" of PSW's for a designated shift of time each day, to move among all patients in the Retirement Home. PSW's deliver care in smaller increments of time, more often, and have the ability to care for multiple patients.

### **6. PSW Quality Improvements**

In collaboration with front line staff from PSW agencies and WWLHIN, quality improvements have been implemented:

- Shared, standardized messaging tools to guide conversations with patients/families
- Improved PSW patient status reporting to WWLHIN

### **7. Windows of Time**

- Provide greater flexibility for PSWs, while maintaining quality of care
- Split shift make PSW work often unappealing to the workforce – By reducing the 'peaks' in the current scheduling of client visits, 25% more care could be provided by the same number of PSWs

### **8. Community Partnerships**

- Guelph Independent Living and Independent Living Centre of Waterloo Region will become contracted PSW provider organizations in buildings

where they already provide attendant care outreach service

- Partnerships with other community support agencies to leverage latent PSW capacity e.g. Senior Support Workers

## **9. Maximizing Independence**

- The Home Independence Program (HIP) is being revised and rebranded to reflect a paradigm shift in service delivery
- The program will focus on a restorative approach to care in which patients and families will take on a more active role in managing their activities of daily living with a strong emphasis on achieving functional independence and weaning off support services
- Additional streams of care have been created with the inclusion of therapy assistants (OTAs/PTAs)

## **10. Home First Intensive Services (HFIS) Refresh**

Review and revisions to HFIS tools and communication material to support equity of service allocation across WWLHIN sub-regions.

## **11. Review of Integrated Assisted Living Program**

WWLHIN will be conducting an evaluation with University of Waterloo on the Integrated Assisted Living Program (IALP) to identify opportunities to better understand the benefits of the program and opportunities to optimize its use.

## **12. Enhanced PSW Education**

WWLHIN partnered with Conestoga College and Canadian Institute of Health Research to offer education to Home & Community Care PSWs and Community Support Services staff to gain new knowledge and build on existing knowledge related to seniors care.

## **The Approach From The Ministry**

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) is aware of the increasingly important role of PSW's in the health care system, and the rights of patients and their families to receive quality care that is delivered by competent and safe providers.

That is why the ministry has embarked upon a PSW strategy aimed at understanding and addressing both the short term and longer term issues associated with planning and the PSW workforce. In addition to the work being done at the WWLHIN, the MOHLTC is investing widely in the PSW shortage. The MOHLTC has launched a training fund for long-term care PSW's that

will be delivered through “Excellence in Resident-Centred Care” (ERCC) program in partnership with Conestoga College that includes 12 modules:

1. Person-centred care
2. Infection Prevention and Control
3. Safety and Mobility
4. Oral Care and Skin Integrity
5. Continence
6. Nutrition and Hydration
7. Delirium, Dementia and Depression
8. Pain and Comfort

For more information on how the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is addressing Caregiver Capacity, visit: [health.gov.on.ca](http://health.gov.on.ca)

# Waterloo Wellington **LHIN**

## **Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network**

Local: 519-748-2222 (Waterloo Region)

Toll-Free: 1-888-883-3313

TTY: 519-883-5589

Website: [www.wwlhins.on.ca](http://www.wwlhins.on.ca) • Email: [waterloowellington@lhins.on.ca](mailto:waterloowellington@lhins.on.ca)

### **Cambridge Office**

73 Water Street North, Suite 501, Cambridge ON N1R 7L6

519-748-2222

### **Waterloo Office**

141 Weber Street South, Waterloo, ON N2J 2A9

519-748-2222

### **Guelph Office**

450 Speedvale Avenue West, Suite 201, Guelph ON N1H 7G7

519-823-2550

### **Fergus Office (By appointment only)**

181 St. Andrew Street East, Unit #10, Fergus, ON N1M 1P9

519-748-2222

Healthy People. Thriving Communities. Bright Futures.