

## Canada is Not Keeping Pace with the Home and Community, and Nursing Home Care Needs of its Rapidly Ageing Population

*NIA Report lays the foundation for More Responsive Long-Term Care System in Canada*

**TORONTO, 09/10/2019** - Canada's provinces and territories are struggling now more than ever to meet the long-term care needs of our rapidly ageing population which includes care at home, in the community, or in designated buildings, such as nursing homes.

"Our health care system was built over 50 years ago when the average age in Canada was 27 and life expectancy was significantly lower than it is today. Our system of universal healthcare focuses on providing physician-based and acute hospital-based healthcare," said [Dr. Samir Sinha](#). "The system was not built to focus on the realities of today with a growing number of Canadians living into their 80's with complex and diverse needs."

As a result, over 430,000 adult Canadians were recently estimated to have unmet home care needs while over 40,000 Canadians are currently on waitlists for nursing homes due, in part, to a lack of available home and community-based care.

In his latest report, [Enabling the Future Provision of Long-Term Care in Canada](#), [Dr. Samir Sinha](#) explores the current landscape of the full range of long-term care services across Canada to determine how Canadians can be best supported to age with greater quality of life, better health outcomes, and dignity through appropriate models of care and support and best practices.

Dr. Sinha's [report](#) shows that in 2018, Canada spent \$33 billion dollars on the provision of long-term care, representing 13 per cent of its overall health care budget. Despite this expenditure, Canada is still not keeping up with the care needs of an ageing population.

This is taking a toll on Canadians - [88 per cent](#) of Canadians are worried about growing health care costs due to the ageing population, while [58 per cent](#) believe many Canadians will delay their retirement to afford the healthcare they need to remain healthy and independent in their communities, according to a recent [survey](#) conducted by Ipsos for the [Canadian Medical Association](#). Canadians are ready to take the issue to the ballot box in the upcoming election with [66 per cent](#) of Canadians over age 55 reporting that they will vote for the party they believe has the best plan for the future of seniors' health care in Canada.

The NIA [report](#) goes on to lay the foundation for more a responsive Long-Term Care System in Canada by identifying four enablers for future change. These include 1) the development of integrated person-centered systems of long-term care, 2) system sustainability through improved financial arrangements, strong workforce and enabling technologies, 3) more standardized health assessments, 4) and policy approaches.

[Dr. Sinha's report](#) is the first in a three-part [NIA Policy Series](#) on the Future of Long-Term Care. The second report, authored by [Dr. Bonnie Jeanne MacDonald](#), [Dr. Michael Wolfson](#), and [Dr. John Hirdes](#) will show projected future costs of home, community, and nursing home care, and the personal tax impact to cover their associated growing expenses. The final installment of the series will bring together the NIA's expertise in financial and health policy with the aim of

presenting feasible and fiscally responsible policy scenarios that have the potential to improve quality of life for seniors in care and improve the value of services delivered. The overall goal of this series will be to help government policy and decision makers, existing care providers and members of the general public to clearly understand the options available to meet the long-term care needs for Canada's ageing population. This report is sponsored by and in collaboration with [AdvantAge Ontario](#), the [Canadian Medical Association](#), [Essity](#), and [Home Instead Senior Care](#).

[Read full report here.](#)

## Quotes

"This is critically important research that sets out clear and compelling evidence on what seniors' care in Canada could and should look like, and what is needed to get there. We are proud to have been a partner on this work that can be a catalyst for change and help shift the dialogue from fearing an ageing population to embracing and celebrating it."

- Lisa Levin, Chief Executive Officer, AdvantAge Ontario

"Each and every day, we care for Canada's seniors, only to have them remain in hospital while waiting for appropriate home care or long-term care beds. The health and well-being of Canada's ageing population can only happen if stakeholders work together to deliver appropriate home care, support for our caregivers and high quality long term care."

- Dr. Sandy Buchman, President, Canadian Medical Association

"Essity is proud to support the thought leadership efforts of the National Institute on Ageing in driving awareness and influencing the healthcare evolution in Canada related to the unique needs of an ageing population. With a common goal of improving care outcomes for Canadians as they age in place; providing access to dignified and age appropriate care. By working together toward this common goal we will get there faster. This collaboration is fueled with a common vision of better care for seniors in Canada. It is our pleasure to be a part of this important work and we look forward to a continued relationship with NIA in this regard."

- Angela Douglas, Marketing Director, Essity Canada Inc.

"Home Instead Senior Care is pleased to be supporting the National Institute on Ageing (NIA) on a three-part policy series on long-term care in Canada. As a provider of in-home care around the world, we know only too well that people want to age on their own terms. The policy series has the potential to help people plan for the way in which they want to age."

-Phyllis Hegstrom, Government Affairs Director, Home Instead Senior Care

### *About the National Institute on Ageing (NIA)*

*The National Institute on Ageing is a Ryerson University think tank focused on the realities of Canada's ageing population. We are Canada's only think tank dedicated to policy solutions at the intersections of healthcare, financial security, and social well-being.*



*Through our work, our mission is to enhance successful ageing across the life course and to make Canada the best place grow up and grow old.*

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