

Nov 1, 2020

## **A Message to Our Community Partners**

### **peopleCare's pandemic response**

With safety and well-being top of mind for all during this global pandemic, we recently engaged with an experienced third-party healthcare researcher to examine peopleCare's response to the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Informed by data, the findings detail the many proactive measures peopleCare implemented to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our Homes and in the LTC sector, work in partnership with government and others to protect residents and staff, and keep family caregivers informed and engaged.

Highlights include early and ongoing infection prevention and control (IPAC) interventions, quick action to secure and sustain the necessary PPE and staffing levels to provide safe care, and balancing precautions while supporting resident quality of life. It was also clear that peopleCare has an opportunity to continue actively engaging with our government and community partners – with a focus on our informed insights in areas such as testing, staffing, IPAC and adoption of innovative technologies – contributing to a stronger and more effective, integrated health system response.

### **Always asking, "what more"?**

As we move ahead with our Wave 2 planning and response, peopleCare's ongoing priority is to save lives. Recognizing that IPAC is critical, we have worked closely with our hospital and Public Health partners to assess and improve our practices. We also hired a Director of IPAC as an investment in our frontline teams' skills and expertise. This newly created role will complement the upcoming positions enabled by the government's welcome recent funding announcement of \$30M to allow LTC homes to hire and train more infection prevention and control specialists.

Outside of COVID, healthcare worker shortages remain an ongoing concern. Through the Canada-Ontario Job Grant, peopleCare has invested in our workforce through a new college partnership that makes it easier for people to earn their PSW certification at no cost.

### **Focus on quality**

As the pandemic continues to shine a spotlight on LTC, media attention and public awareness around compliance issues has heightened. peopleCare continues to maintain a positive partnership and reputation with the Ministry, thanks to our excellent overall and long-standing record of compliance, which has remained steadfast even through this pandemic.

### **Stronger, Together**

Working together to keep everyone safe, through new and stronger partnerships, is a silver lining of COVID. For example, Family Councils Ontario, the Ontario Caregiver Organization and the Ontario Association of Resident Councils have been instrumental in our ability to bring new resources into our Homes that benefit residents, staff and families, and they continue to enable our steadfast commitment to resident-centred care.

As our frontline teams have led with heart, dedication and compassion through uncharted times, our community partners have been right beside us every step of the way, helping us create a culture of caring and engagement in our Homes. We so appreciate your unwavering support, and please know you always have ours.