

CUPE Ontario's Campaign: Make 3.5 Hours the Law

CUPE Ontario wants to congratulate all of its long-term care locals and many individual members for their hard work over the last two months. We have forced the Liberal government to make changes to Bill 140 that will benefit both workers and residents in long-term care facilities. The government will now include staffing and care standards in the proposed law.



What we did:

Radio Ads Province-wide ads running from January 8-15 called for 3.5 hours of care.

Info Pickets Locals blanketed homes, residents and families with brochures, buttons

Deputations CUPE Ontario's Sid Ryan led off the first of eight standing committee deputations in Toronto, Kingston, Sudbury and London by CUPE locals.

Media Along with releases prior to the hearings, CUPE Ontario's Health Care Workers Coordinating Committee Chair Sue Schmidt, Sid Ryan, Fred Hahn, Michael Hurley, and front line workers participated in media conferences held in eight cities during the two weeks of the public hearings.

MPP Demos Long-term care locals demonstrated at MPP offices on January 26.

Meet with your MPP — It's your future!

It is critical that CUPE Ontario, its long term-care locals and OCHU keep pushing for 3.5 hours of care per day for each resident in long-term care facilities.

No front line care worker should have to put up with heavy workloads, low pay and job stress. No elderly or frail person should have to live in a facility without the care they deserve. Yet without a decent standard of care and appropriate levels of staffing set out in the new law, these conditions will continue.

You can make a real difference by meeting with your MPP prior to the upcoming consultations. CUPE Ontario is preparing materials to assist you with your MPP meeting.

Very shortly, CUPE Ontario will send every local MPP lobby kits to get members actively involved in winning a 3.5-hour standard. We will also send survey cards to be filled out by members. It will draw out information that the Liberal government needs to hear on your jobs and the care issues you face in facilities.

3.5 hours: What it means

- The province uses an assessment tool to figure out how much care residents need. Those with lighter care needs are deemed to have lower acuity; those with heavier care needs have higher acuity.
- The funding each home receives for nursing and personal support care (feeding, bathing, nursing etc.), is based on the level of acuity in the home.

- A facility with the average case mix (or an average level of need), would receive resources for nursing and personal care specifically to provide 3.5 hours of care per resident. Those facilities with lower acuity levels would receive less. Those with higher acuity would receive more.

The level of acuity in Ontario homes has increased due to downloading of heavier care patients from hospitals and mental health facilities and the aging of residents. The standard must be modernized to meet today's care needs.

Based on standards in other jurisdictions across Canada and the US, 3.5 hours of care is the minimum required to reach the goal of prevention of risk. It is not an optimum.