

Bill 140: Long-Term Care Act



Government to add staffing, care standards to Bill 140 CUPE made the difference – Take a bow!

The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Ontario's campaign on long-term care has won a major victory. Led by CUPE Ontario and its long-term care locals, the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions (OCHU), and the Ontario Health Coalition (OHC), the campaign to strengthen Bill 140 for the benefit of both residents and front line workers is making a major difference.

On January 26, the same day as CUPE Ontario locals picketed MPP offices across the province, the Liberal government announced that it would make changes to the proposed long-term care act, including amendments to:

- Establish staffing and care standards;
- Reduce reporting paperwork associated with the new act;
- Extend licence terms to allow for more certainty for operators;
- Recognize the government's support of the not-for-profit long-term care homes sector.

Alongside a strong CUPE presence at public hearings conducted in four cities, CUPE Ontario President Sid Ryan and the OHC's Natalie Mehra engaged in almost daily talks with senior officials in the Health Minister's office.

Twelve years after the Harris government eliminated standards of care, CUPE Ontario and others have overcome a very difficult hurdle and moved the government once again to introduce a standard of care higher than was previously set. Now it is time to ensure that standard becomes 3.5 hours.

3.5 hours is the ultimate goal

The government plans to hold further consultations this April-May to gather information on what would be an appropriate level of care. It will publish a proposal on the Ministry of Health website and invite written comments and submissions. We must keep pushing for 3.5 hours of care per day for each resident in long-term care facilities.

With other provinces aiming for 3.5 hours, there is no reason why Ontario shouldn't have this standard as well. It is likely that the New Democrats will include a 3.5-hour standard of care in its platform. We need to push the McGuinty Liberals to do the same.

Meet with your MPP – It's your future!

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.



DISTRIBUTE THIS NEWSLETTER TO ALL YOUR MEMBERS!

CUPE Ontario's Campaign: Make 3.5 Hours the Law

What we did

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.

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.

What we need to do now: Next campaign phase

We need to drive home our message on standards of care. Very shortly, CUPE Ontario will send every local the following materials to get their members actively involved in winning a 3.5-hour standard. You will receive:

MPP LOBBY KITS

Encourage your members to meet with MPPs across the province from now through April and report back to CUPE Ontario on where their MPP stands.

MEMBER SURVEY CARDS

Get every one of your members involved. We're preparing a Long-Term Care Worker Survey for your members to fill out. It will draw out information that the Liberal government needs to hear on your jobs and the care issues you face in facilities.

**For the latest updates on Bill 140,
continue to visit: www.cupe.on.ca**



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 its level of acuity.
- A facility with the average case mix 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.