

**News Release - for immediate release**

**Nurses' Union pleased with LTC Report; Disappointed government didn't commit to improvements in health human resources**

(September 21, 2020 – Halifax) In response to two reviews of outbreaks in long-term care facilities, the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union is calling the recommendations in the review meaningful and impactful if implemented in a timely manner.

The report lists 17 recommendations aimed at safeguarding our most vulnerable citizens, not just during a pandemic but at all times. Many of the recommendations mirror information released in NSNU's 2016 *Broken Homes* report on long term care and the most recent brief of June 2020 on *Staffing Standards*. Although the Nurses' Union is pleased to see a commitment from government around PPE management, enhanced communication and a funding commitment of \$26 million this fiscal year, the Union is disappointed government only agrees in principle with some of the staffing solutions offered up by the panel.

"All of the recommendations have merit and should be implemented. Most notably, recommendations on staffing ratios and hours of care per resident. The evidence is clear that increases in overall health human resources is fundamental to improving long term care outcomes, especially during times of crisis," said Janet Hazelton, NSNU president.

The investigators cite NSNU and CFNU research data and information in their report similarly calling for a solid commitment from government to set standard minimum hours of care per resident.

"I heard many good things from the authors of the report and government today, but the government's response does not go far enough. Without an assurance that appropriate staffing levels will be an immediate priority, I cannot see how we'll be fully prepared if a second wave of COVID-19 strikes our nursing homes."

Hazelton claims bedsores, falls, and other pre COVID-19 issues in long term care should have been the impetus for government to finally address staffing issues in the long-term care sector. She goes on to say that COVID-19 should have compelled government to commit to hiring more nurses – she is uncertain what it will take to convince government of this.

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The NSNU represents over 7500 Registered Nurses, Nurse Practitioners and Licensed Practical Nurses working in hospitals, long term care facilities, and community care (VON and Canadian Blood Services). NSNU acute care locals include the IWK and hospitals located in Zone 4, formerly Capital District Health Authority (including the Dartmouth General and Cobequid Community Health Centre) and all other Zones in the province. The NSNU represents nurses in the majority of long-term care facilities throughout the province. The NSNU is a member organization of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions which represents over 200,000 nurses and student nurses across Canada.

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