



Ontario Community
Support Association

August 23, 2021

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Premier's Office
Room 281 Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

The Honourable Christine Elliott
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health
College Park 5th Floor 777 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Dear Premier Ford and Deputy Premier Elliott,

The Ontario government's announcement of the extension to the temporary PSW wage increase was a welcome and needed investment, especially as support workers in home and community care have a critical role to play as the province moves through the fourth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, we were disappointed to see that the measure is set to expire October 31st, 2021, and that no commitment has been made to a permanent increase.

Personal Support Workers are the backbone of the health system and the 38,000 that work in home and community care allow the most vulnerable Ontarians to live safely in their homes and their communities, avoid hospitalization and delay admission into long-term care.

It is well known that PSWs in the home and community care sector are the lowest paid in the Ontario health system and are making on average 19% less than PSWs in the hospital sector and 9% less than PSWs in the long-term care. The sector is experiencing a significant shortage of PSWs due to compensation disparities, organizational capped salaries due to Bill 124, Protecting a Sustainable Public Sector for Future Generations Act, and a lack of inclusion in government incentives for our sector. All of which have made recruitment and retention of PSWs and home and community care staff extremely difficult.

PSWs deserve wage parity and OCSA cautions the government that although a temporary increase is encouraging for our sector, the government must do more. Without permanent changes, these challenges will only get worse.

Should you need further information, please contact Janice Bedore, Executive Assistant to the CEO, at janice.bedore@ocsa.on.ca or 416-256-3021 ext 224.

Sincerely,



Deborah Simon,
CEO, Ontario Community Support Association