



News Release

For Immediate Release

December 2, 2015

Five Years After Last Audit, Home Care Problems Linger: Auditor General

(TORONTO) The province has yet to correct many of the problems in the Home Care Program of Ontario's 14 Community Care Access Centres (CCACs) that were identified in a 2010 audit, Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk says in her *2015 Annual Report*.

Between 2008/09 and 2014/15, the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care increased spending on home-care services by 42% (from \$1.76 billion to \$2.52 billion), while clients served increased by 22%, from 586,400 to 713,500. In 2014/15, approximately 70% of CCAC long-stay patients were categorized as having complex care needs, compared to less than 40% only five years ago.

"Although the Ministry has recognized the importance of strengthening the home and community care sector, clients still face long wait times for personal-support services, and they still receive different levels of home-care service depending on where in Ontario they live," Lysyk said today following tabling of the Report.

The Auditor General found that a person with the same assessed level of needs might get a specific quantity of personal support service from one CCAC, but a lower level of service at another or, in one region of the province, no service at all.

As was the case in 2010, there are still no provincial standards specifying the level of services clients with similar needs would be entitled to. As well, per-client funding still varies significantly among CCACs, so that each CCAC decides on the types and levels of service it provides, in keeping with its budget.

"Until these overarching issues are addressed, Ontarians will continue to receive inequitable home-care services," Lysyk said.

Following are some of the Auditor General's other significant findings in the Report:

- At three CCACs visited during the audit, 65% of the initial home-care assessments for all clients, and 32% of the reassessments for clients with chronic or complex needs, were not done within the required time frames in 2014/15. It took over a year to assess some clients.
- Ontario law says clients may receive up to 90 hours of personal support services per month, but care co-ordinators usually allow a maximum of 60 hours. CCACs must work within their budget in allocating hours of service.
- Caseloads of care co-ordinators vary significantly from one CCAC to another, and even within the same CCAC. For example, one care co-ordinator had 170 chronic clients, while the Ontario Association of Community Care Access Centres' guidelines say there should be no more than 100.
- Supports to caregivers such as family members of home-care clients are limited and not consistently available across Ontario.

- CCACs do not consistently visit service providers to ensure they are complying with contract requirements and do not deal with service provider underperformance in a consistent way.
- Wait times to access adult day programs and supportive housing programs varied between CCACs and are not meeting demand.
- Better oversight and planning was needed for the Personal Support Worker Wage Subsidy Program.

For more information, please contact:

Bonnie Lysyk
Auditor General
(416) 327-1326

For more information and to view the full report, please visit www.auditor.on.ca