



SUMMER UPDATE

Care Watch is pleased to update you on our recent work and activities. Our organization regards 2018 as an especially significant year, because it is a double-election year for Ontarians: The provincial election was held this past June, and municipal elections are in October, just a couple of months away. Both elections hold significant implications for Ontario's seniors. In keeping with our mandate, we continue to advocate for high-quality, affordable, and equitable home care and community support services for Ontario's senior citizens.

Gearing Up for Municipal Elections

Care Watch is mobilizing for the Municipal Elections on Monday, October 22, 2018. Local governments across Ontario play a significant role in providing a wide range of services to Ontarians, including services that affect seniors' ability to live independently in their own homes. Care Watch will be focussing on 3 areas that directly affect seniors: safe, affordable housing; supportive services in the community; and affordable, accessible transportation. We are developing materials related to these issues along with a set of questions seniors can ask local candidates. We are seeking to work collaboratively with community organizations that share similar concerns. At Care Watch, we firmly believe seniors can be a voice for positive change – municipal candidates should have to earn our vote!



Care Watch will be posting material related to the October Municipal Election on our website – please check periodically the 2018 Elections page at: <https://carewatchontario.com/elections-2018/>. We will also be sending out another newsletter closer to the October Municipal Elections.

Advocacy Campaign During the Recent Ontario Election



Care Watch was similarly engaged during the June 7 Ontario Election. Our goal was to give seniors the information they would need to make informed voting choices. We prepared backgrounders on important issues relating to home care and supportive community services for seniors and suggesting specific questions to ask political candidates. Several months before the election, we reached out to the presidents and leaders of the Liberal, New Democratic, Progressive Conservative, and Green parties. We asked them to address key issues, including how they intend to ensure supportive services for seniors to enable them to live in their own homes and their plans for providing stable, increased funding to underpin these services.

We used the responses (and, in some cases, lack of response), as well as our review of available party platforms, policy announcements, and public statements, to evaluate the parties' positions. We then distributed our analysis in a pre-election newsletter and posted it on the Care Watch website at: <https://carewatchontario.com/elections-2018/>.

In June, Ontarians elected a new provincial government. While it is still too early to know the full impact on services for Ontario's seniors, Care Watch has reached out to all political parties in the Legislature, as well as to key government ministers, to highlight the need for home care and community support services; we are also monitoring changes. We will continue to work with political leaders and ministry officials, as well as with individuals and organizations who share Care Watch's objectives.



Remembering Bea Levis

Care Watch lost a founding member, cherished friend, and mentor, Bea Levis, in June 2018. Bea was also a mother, grandmother, activist, and teacher. She gave a voice to older women and truly made a difference on behalf of seniors. Bea was well recognized for her many contributions, winning awards such as the Order of Ontario, Ontario Government and City of Toronto Senior of the Year, and the Positive Aging Award. Bea is warmly remembered by those who had the privilege of working with her at Care Watch.

Other Care Watch Activities

Working together, senior citizens can make a difference in allowing all Ontarians to live safely in our homes and communities as we age. Having confirmed our advocacy mandate in 2017, Care Watch continues to promote access to home care and community support services province wide, by advocating for the establishment, in legislation, of a standard Basket of Services to ensure that access to supportive services does not depend on where a senior lives.



Other notable activities during 2018 included:

- **Annual General Meeting:** On January 17, Care Watch held its 2017 annual general meeting (AGM). Having completed her two-year term as Chair, Josephine Grayson stepped down and Michèle Harding was welcomed as the new Board Chair. Care Watch also recognized the outstanding contributions of five outgoing Board members: Dr. Sayed Fazl, Cheryl Gorman, Sandra Sokoloff, Fern Teplitsky, and Mary Estelle Wiley. We welcomed new members Barbara Carmichael, Anita Dressler, Afzal Masoodi, and Ben Vozzolo. Other business included the Chair's Annual Report, Treasurer's Annual Report, and by-law revisions.
- **Partner organization for a major research project:** Care Watch is proud to be a key partner in a 7-year research project, "Imagining Age-Friendly 'Communities within Communities': International Promising Practices," funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and launched on June 13. A team of researchers, led by Dr. Tamara Daly of York University, will examine age-friendly practices in 7 cities in Canada and 5 others in Norway, Denmark, Australia, New Zealand, and Taiwan. The project will assess the effectiveness of age-friendly initiatives under way in the context of demographic shifts related to population aging and diversity. For more information, please see: <https://carewatchontario.com/publications/research-reports/imagining-age-friendly-communities-within-communities/>.
- **Presentation at the University of Toronto:** On May 3, Care Watch presented "Dangerous myths about seniors: What do they mean for policy and practice?" at the Rehabilitation Sciences Institute at U of T. The presentation, open to students, faculty, and administrative staff from therapy-related programmes, was recorded and can be accessed at: <https://carewatchontario.com/elections-2018/additional-resources/>.
- **Providing feedback and input to government policy:** In January 2018, Care Watch made a Pre-Budget Submission to the Ontario Government calling for improved funding for home care and community support services for Ontario's senior citizens. More recently, Care Watch requested that the Auditor General of Ontario investigate the Ontario Government's establishment of Personal Support Services Ontario (PSSO), about which Care Watch has expressed a number of concerns. Care Watch also participates in the Toronto Seniors Strategy 2.0 Accountability Table, to identify and promote local services for elderly residents. We continue to encourage seniors to participate in local decision-making processes to ensure that their voices are heard at all levels of government.
- **Participation on the Seniors Liaison Committee:** During 2018, the Care Watch Chair served on the Seniors Liaison Committee of the Ministry of Seniors Affairs (now known as the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility). Through this forum, Care Watch provides constructive feedback regarding government policies, programmes, and services affecting Ontario's seniors.
- **Development of our website:** We have redesigned the Care Watch website and added new content, including materials related to the 2018 elections.

Support Us: We welcome donations to support the advocacy work of Care Watch. Please send cheques payable to Care Watch to: Care Watch, 140 Merton St. 2nd floor, Toronto ON M4S 1A1. Care Watch cannot issue tax receipts.