



# CARE WATCH

Advocating Quality Home & Community Care

## What's the Story? Basket of Services

Personal care  
Home services  
Meals



Adult day services  
Transportation  
Caregiver support

Care coordination

### A Tale of Two Families

Susan, 74, lives on a farm 20 minutes from the nearest town and 60 minutes from the nearest hospital. Susan has dementia and also recently fell and fractured her hip. She can't yet walk, toilet, or dress herself on her own. Her husband Glen, who is 75, has chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and is exhausted. He also has failing eyesight, so he no longer drives at night or in bad weather. They depend on neighbours to take them grocery shopping and to appointments.

Fatima, 67, came to Canada after 10 years in refugee camps. She now lives in northeast Toronto with her husband and granddaughter. They work long hours and have no car, so Fatima relies on public transit to attend her community association's health and ESL classes or to visit a clinic. She has to walk half a mile to catch a bus to the subway. In winter, the 45-minute trip is even harder, because she doesn't see well and feels unsteady. Falling could end her independence.

### What are the problems?

Like most seniors, Susan and Fatima want to remain in their homes and communities, but they and their families need support. In-home and community services provide that support. Ontario offers and partially funds many of these services, but availability varies. What each senior actually receives can depend as much on geography as on need. In one location, a senior may be able to remain at home; in another, a senior with comparable needs may end up in the hospital or a long-term care home.

### What can be done?

**Care Watch advocates that Ontario define and require a consistent province-wide basket of services.**

We advocate for high quality, affordable, and equitable access to home and community care for all of Ontario's elderly. Every Ontario senior is entitled to a comprehensive array – or basket – of services. Individual need will guide what each senior receives, but all will have access to personal care, meals, home maintenance, adult day services, transportation, caregiver support, and care coordination.

### Making it Work

This basket of services needs to be:

- ✓ **Equitable** — based on need
- ✓ **Accessible** — seniors know how to get what they need when they need it
- ✓ **Preventive** — services foster independence
- ✓ **Cost-effective** — per day, home care and community services cost about \$55, a hospital bed about \$1,000, and a long-term care space about \$130.

When all seniors have access to a comprehensive range of supportive home care services, everyone benefits. Ontario's seniors have a safe and supported environment, and our already stressed health care system uses its specialized resources most effectively.

### What can you do?

You can reach out to neighbours who need assistance or join an advocacy or other volunteer group.

Each level of government – federal, provincial, and municipal – has a role in providing supportive services, so you can attend meetings and talk with current politicians and also those running for office. As a start, you can ask them:

- How will you promote providing a comprehensive range of support services for seniors?
- How will you support funding to develop or expand community support services?
- How will you support and advocate for equitable and consistent access to home care and community support service

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