

**BRIEF TO THE  
GOVERNMENT OF ONTARIO  
FROM  
THE UNITED SENIOR CITIZENS OF ONTARIO INC. (USCO)**

**1. HEALTH**

**1.1** There is a demonstrated connection between poor oral health and diseases.

**The U S C O requests the Provincial Government put in place a dental benefit plan.**

**1.2** Influenza is a leading cause of illness, hospitalization and death for seniors and vaccination is the best way to keep seniors healthy and at home.

**The U S C O urges the Government of Ontario fund the Superior High-Dose Influenza Vaccine for all eligible adults 65 and older.**

**1.3** Good health is very important for seniors to live a healthy and productive life.

**The U S C O recommends the Ontario Government provide free immunization to all people 50 and over.**

**1.4** The common problem of pressure ulcers [bed sores] in elderly patients can be addressed more effectively and economically if hospitals and long term care facilities invest in PRESSURE-REDUCTION MATTRESSES.

**The U S C O strongly suggests that the Ontario Government make available funding to supply pressure-reduction mattresses to hospitals and long term care facilities.**

**1.5** Really sick patients are going to hospitals and having to wait up to 18 hours to see a doctor or nurse with no food or medication.

**The U S C O requests the Ontario Government ensure that sick patients be at least checked out when they are admitted to find out what their immediate needs are.**

**1.6** The medical needs of the senior population are both greater than that of the general population and often misunderstood by general practitioners.

**The U S C O strongly urges the Ontario Government provide more funding to the training and education of gerontologists and nurse practitioners.**

**1.7** For years age has played a part of the clogging of arteries and other countries have machines to unclog arteries. Seniors need that to heal faster with less invasive procedures.

**The U S C O asks the Ontario Government to pursue and implement this procedure.**

**1.8** Ontario's population is growing and aging and we do not have enough doctors to adequately treat our current population.

**The U S C O urges the Ontario Government to fund the necessary monies to look after our growing and aging population.**

**1.9** The Ontario Government does not pay for some of the medication for cancer patients.

**The U S C O strongly requests that the Ontario Government pay for these drugs for all citizens of Ontario.**

**1.10** Seniors get shingles and suffer very much from them.

**The U S C O recommends the Ontario Government cover seniors of every age for the Shingle Vaccine.**

**1.11** Some older seniors who live in their own homes need some sort of home care; the amount they receive is marginally adequate.

**The U S C O strongly urges that the Ontario Government increase the hours and support of home care that many seniors are in need of.**

**1.12** Many seniors living in Long Term Care have to be taken to the hospital by ambulance and returned back to the home by ambulance.

**The U S C O calls on the Ontario Government to cover the costs of any ambulance transfer to Long Term Care.**

1.13 Most tests to diagnose Prostate Cancer are billed to the patient.

**The U S C O strongly urges the Ontario Government make the cost of the PSA test free.**

1.14 One in four Ontarians do not take medication they need because of the cost.

**The U S C O encourages the Ontario Government to implement a Pharmaceutical program that is available to all Ontarians.**

1.15 There is an unavailability of Long Term Care beds and the Government is cutting back on home care for seniors trying to stay in their homes longer, with many seniors not having family close by.

**The U S C O asks that the Government make available more monies for Long Term Care residents and shorten up wait times and make it more affordable for individuals who need to go to Long Term Care.**

1.16 The cost of hearing aids and other devices steadily grows.

**The U S C O requests that the Ontario Government raise the Assisted Devices Program (ADP) for payment of hearing aids and the cost of batteries.**

1.17 Make sure all health care workers attending patients in their own home *from agencies* are bonded.

**The U S C O urges the Ontario Government that all health care workers providing care in clients' homes are bonded.**

**1.18** The skill of Long Term Care facility staff is more important than the absolute number of staff.

**The U S C O requests that the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care should increase the training offered both online which is lower cost and in real time. The training should be mandatory for staff to reach benchmarks of performance.**

**1.19** The Ontario Ministry of Health is de-listing a number of medications.

**The U S C O asks the Ontario Government to re-list medications that are required to maintain health.**

**1.20** There are significant cutbacks in health services.

**The U S C O requests the Ontario Government provide more clinics staffed by registered nurses who are given authorization to write prescriptions and refer patients to hospitals.**

**1.21** The Senior Population will be growing significantly over the next number of years due to longer life expectancies.

**U S C O asks the Ontario Government to meet or exceed the Canada average for staffing Long Term Care facilities.**

**1.22** Nursing home inspections should be increased to prevent abuse and neglect.

**The U S C O asks the Ontario Government be more strict on Long Term Care Facilities.**

**1.23** The government is looking to reduce costs of health care and seniors would prefer to stay at home rather in hospital.

**The U S C O urges the Ontario Government to allow seniors to remain in their homes for medical and non-medical services instead of a hospital.**

**1.24** Diabetics on insulin have the insulin covered by OHIP, but the needles are not covered. This means people who cannot afford the needles to give the insulin are often not getting the proper dose, and therefore becoming sick, and having to go to the hospital which costs a lot more than needles would cost.

**The U S C O asks the Ontario Government cover the cost of needles and their test strips.**

**1.25** Many seniors need to wear glasses and the examination is covered by OHIP but glasses are not.

**The U S C O urges the Ontario Government to cover the cost of eye glasses to a certain price by ADP.**

**1.26** Due to small print on medication, it is virtually impossible to read the dosage.

**The U S C O recommends to the Ontario Government that larger print be used on medication or a print out be provided.**

**1.27** Personal care support workers perform the most basic simplistic and yet most vital support care for each elderly individual.

**The U S C O asks the Provincial Government should work with the College of Nurses of Ontario, and the Registered Nurses of Ontario on a task force to require mandatory inclusion of all PSW into an established governing body to include standards of practice and a common code of ethics, and scope of practice, along with a good support system for the actual workers.**

**1.28** The population of people over 65 years is projected to more than double.

**The U S C O calls upon the Provincial Government to implement the following minimums for care:**

- 1. The ratio of nurse practitioners to facility be one nurse practitioner per 200-300 residents;**
- 2. Improve the 2.85 RN hours per resident per day to 3.5 hours per day;**
- 3. The mix of care providers be Nurse Practitioners, 1 per facility; 20% registered nurses; 25% Registered Practical Nurses; 55% Personal Support Workers (Health Care Aids).**

**1.29** Long Term Care homes are experiencing an unprecedented number of sexual abuse incidents.

**The U S C O urges the Ontario Government that Long Term Care homes administration be provided with background security checks for all incoming residents.**

## **2. TRANSPORTATION**

- 2.1** Cars are being manufactured with running lights in the daytime, but no taillights go on making it very difficult for the person following the vehicle behind to see at times.

**The U S C O asks the Ontario Government to mandate the manufacturers to make vehicles with tail lights that come on the same as running lights in the daytime.**

- 2.2.** Drugs, alcohol, speed, distracted driving, and possibly future driving high on cannabis is causing more accidents, property damage, and death on our highways.

**The U S C O strongly urges the Ontario Government to impose stiffer fines, longer loss of drivers' licenses and jail time to drivers who abuse their driving privileges.**

- 2.3.** Inattentive driving through cell phone use is rapidly expanding.

**The U S C O asks the Ontario Government to authorize police to seize all drivers devices while driving.**



- 2.4. Through Ontario Climate Change Strategy the government wished to reduce emissions from transportation by promoting battery, electric, and hybrid electric vehicles.

**The U S C O requests the Ontario Government not spend money to subsidize these expensive cars that hard working Ontarians have paid through their taxes.**

- 2.5. Out of necessity in rural areas people need their vehicles to take them to hospitals, doctor's offices, and clinics for consults and treatments and they have to pay the cost of large parking fees.

**The U S C O asks the Ontario Government to exempt those who need ongoing treatment ie. chemo therapy, dialysis and other medical procedures in an outpatient capacity and day stay units from paying parking fees**

### **3. HOUSING**

**3.1.** The delivery fees of hydro have grown to enormous amounts for people living in Ontario.

**The U S C O asks the Ontario Government that people in Ontario not be charged enormous delivery fees and high hydro bills.**

**3.2.** Seniors on fixed income are unable to afford proper housing.

**The U S C O requests the Ontario Government provide affordable housing for seniors.**

**3.3.** Many seniors would like to be independent in their own homes or live in group homes where they would take care of each other.

**U S C O recommends that the Ontario Government have Municipalities designate parcels of land close to shopping etc. where smaller more accessible homes for single, or larger homes for multiple senior living, can be built with increased support it gives to seniors.**

#### **4. MISCELLANEOUS**

- 4.1 . For seniors it is very difficult shopping and figuring out expiry dates on packages and cans because some have month, year, and day and others have day, month and year.

**The U S C O asks the Ontario Government to make this universal expiry date printed the same.**

- 4.2 More and more grandparents on fixed income are forced to raise their grandchildren.

**The U S C O asks the Ontario Government to help monetarily those grandparents that are raising grandchildren without assistance.**

- 4.3. The government of Ontario and its residents have allowed business to introduce plastic products into our lifestyle.

**The U S C O recommends to the Ontario Government to create a task force to review current recycling laws to curb or combat the production of plastic products such as plastic straws plastic bags and water bottles.**