

SUSTAINING SENIORS' INDEPENDENCE & SAFETY

Introduction

The Government must address the escalating imposition of government initiatives that affect Seniors. Downloading of programs to the municipalities that ultimately and significantly increase property tax, the Health Tax itself, and the deterioration of service to Seniors by professionals who can not run a business on health plans' outdated payments for service, are but a few of the government's actions and lack of action that are seriously impacting on the quality of life of the members of RTO/ERO and all Ontario's Seniors.

Housing

RTO/ERO believes that the immediate environment of Seniors must offer dignity, privacy, independence and care, with the financial, social and psychological support required to maintain a sense of self-worth. Recent activity of the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) has the potential for increased property taxes that far exceed cost of living increases. The Government must take action to curtail the escalating property taxes that are exacerbated by provincial downloading to the municipalities! When small business property taxes increased exponentially, the government instituted rate increase controls. Do Ontario's Seniors deserve any less?

Transportation

RTO/ERO recognizes the importance of transportation for Seniors to enable them to participate in life enrichment programs that encourage independence, foster self-esteem and utilize their many talents. Most Seniors are too proud to impose on even family for transportation to activities, and so reduce their trips - social and shopping - until they are invited.

Elder Abuse

Four to ten percent of Ontario's Seniors are alleged to be abused through neglect or mistreatment. Abuse can be physical, sexual, financial, social, cultural, psychological, emotional, verbal, institutional, systemic isolation or neglect. Focused governmental programs can alleviate many of the identified causes. Support programs for families, caregivers, and communities will assist. We applaud recent initiatives that regularly evaluate care provided in government institutions.

Proposed Action Plan

RTO/ERO believes the government must act immediately to ensure that:

- appropriate and affordable housing options are available for Seniors;
- appropriate transportation and additional public wheelchair accessible mini-vans are available;
- health services to Seniors be under direct doctor supervision; and
- annual reporting and follow up actions to further reduce and eliminate the incidence of elder abuse are taken.

Questions

1. What action will your government/party take to change the MPAC mandate so that potential property tax increases will be in line with inflation?
2. What action will your government/party take to ensure that Seniors have access to affordable housing?
3. What action will your government/party take to increase public transportation opportunities?
4. What action will your government/party take to reduce and eliminate elder abuse in Ontario?