

Provincial Attendant Services Advisory Committee – Election 2014 – NDP Response

May 29, 2014

Dear Mr. Athanasopoulos,

Thank you for writing to outline your concerns about the large number of Ontarians waiting for home care services. The Ontario NDP shares your concerns. We are committed to high quality, public healthcare that is accessible for all Ontarians and we understand the specific needs of Ontarians with disabilities.

We know that, thanks to years of inaction, wait lists have grown too long and wait times have grown too high. The Ontario NDP has simple solutions that make sense to ensure that all Ontarians get the level of care they need in the comfort and dignity.

That's why a key part of our platform is to implement a five day home care guarantee. We can do this by investing each year in eliminating the waitlists for personal support worker care and non-nursing care and in matching funding to a flexible fund to cover costs for other kinds of care and to build capacity in the system. We have deliberately planned our budgeting around preserving enough flexibility in this program to make sure that each individual Ontarian gets the kind of home care they need when they need it. Further, we will create 1,400 new long-term care beds, eliminating the entire crisis wait list

The Ontario NDP is also strongly committed to ensuring adequate supports for Ontarians with disabilities. We have been pushing the out of touch Liberal government to increase the Ontario Disability Support Program for years. In 2013 we were successful in our insistence that they create an earnings exemption that will allow recipients of ODSP to keep the first \$200 in employment earnings before the government begins clawing back their benefits. We will also implement a 1% increase to ODSP. The NDP recognizes that ODSP still does not reflect the actual cost of living, including the cost of shelter, energy, and nutritious food. Our goal is to address this issue and to stand up for middle class families.

We look forward to working with you to address the problems currently facing Ontarians with disabilities. As The Ontario NDP, we believe strongly in a just and inclusive Ontario and we will work with stakeholders to make this a reality.

Thank you again for your advocacy toward these goals.