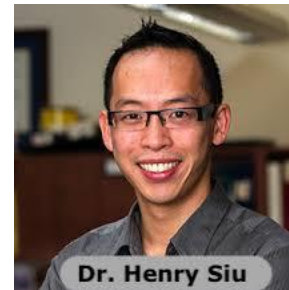


COVID-19 REPORT

	Outbreaks	Ont cases	Deaths	LTC deaths	% LTC deaths
July 13	27	36,090	2,723	1,836	67.4%
July 27	13	37,799	2,764	1,844	66.7%
August 11	18	40,194	2,786	1,847	66.3%

With only three deaths of LTC residents in the past two weeks, and none in the past few days, the impact of the first wave of COVID-19 subsides. The measures of Emergency Order 3 remain in effect, making LTC one of the safest places during these testy days of opening up. Physicians and NPs, like staff, continue to receive regular screening for COVID-19. Regular screening remains important not only to protect the residents but also provides an indication of the virus in the community. Physicians return to usual rounds mindful of screening and PPE.

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March, Drs. Henry Siu, Lorand Kristof and Fred Mather launched to survey to clinicians of OLTCC and the NLOT teams, Assessing the preparedness of the long term care sector to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in Ontario, Canada. The results are submitted for review but not yet published. The investigators thank everyone who responded to the survey.



The electronic survey produced a favourable return of 54% (160/294). Respondents report a widespread implementation of several important interventions in LTC homes including respiratory isolation protocols, active screening of new admissions, coordination with regional public health and screening of new admissions. Although there was ample communication from LTC stakeholder organizations, government and public health officials, the feasibility of implementing some of the recommendations was a concern. Clinicians indicated that the engagement of the LTC sector in a coordinated community-based primary care response was lacking. The conclusion indicates efforts by government and public health were unilateral. The perception is that better engagement with LTC for an earlier coordinated response may have prevented lethal outbreaks.

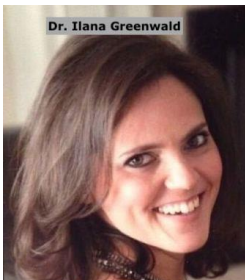
Chronic understaffing and underfunding of LTC are major contributors to the severe outcomes in certain LTC homes during the pandemic. The strain is especially felt by personal support workers (PSWs) who provide most of the hands-on care. PSWs make up 58% of LTC employees compared to nursing at 25%. PSWs are unregulated and often suffer from workplace burnout, with half leaving before five years on the job.

[Understaffing turned seniors' homes into COVID-19 danger zones, G&M, Aug 11](#)

FRONT LINE CONNECT

“As challenging as this COVID-era of healthcare is for us all, the hardest part of patient care these days is watching patients suffer alone without family and friends at their bedside. We, the frontline healthcare workers, are looking to partner with private industry and anyone else who is interested to change this.” (Frontline Connect petition)

Visitor restrictions and PPE requirements for staff impacts the wellbeing of long term care residents, especially since most have some degree of cognitive impairment. With the pandemic now passing the 150-day mark, many residents still require virtual visits to maintain contact with family, friends and others. Frontline Connect (FC) provides devices for LTC homes as well as hospitals and hospices. Donated devices are factory reset and disinfected before use. The home set up each device to the Frontline Connect Google Suite’s Multiple Device Management system). This provides the device with its own email account, and downloads communication apps such as Skype, Zoom, Google Meet, Signal and/or WhatsApp. These devices can be given to patients for use or shared among the healthcare workers to connect with patients and families. The devices will be remotely monitored by the FC technical team. They can set-up devices and are available for support and troubleshooting.



Frontline Connect was founded by Drs. Ilana Greenwald (Scarborough), Humaira Saeed (Brampton), Sim Sandhandwalia, Ari Greenwald (Hamilton), and a few others. FC is a not-for-profit and partner with National Initiative for Care of the Elderly (NICE). For further information or inquiries about donating devices, contact: <https://frontlineconnect.ca>

PRACTICAL PEARLS IN LONG TERM CARE GOING VIRTUAL

OLTCC’s annual conference, the largest for LTC physician in Canada, like other meetings will go virtual. The program is being finalized and will be released soon. Survey responses guided the times and length of the program. Sessions will include plenaries and a selection of interactive workshops and will occur in three-hour segments on Friday, October 16, Wednesday October 21, Friday, October 23 and October 30. The accredited sessions will be recorded and can be viewed later. The OLTCC Annual General Meeting, usually held with the conference, will be a Zoom meeting at another time.

