



# **MEDIA RELEASE**

## **Ontario Nurses' Association**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### ***Ontario Nurses Say Long-Term Care Safety Needs Improvement: Staff and Residents Continue to be at Risk***

TORONTO – The Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA) is urging the provincial government to work more quickly to improve the safety of residents and staff in long-term care facilities.

“It’s been more than a year since the release of recommendations following a coroner’s inquest into the murder of two long-term care residents at the Casa Verde nursing home by a cognitively impaired third resident,” says ONA’s President, Linda Haslam-Stroud, RN. “While the coroner’s jury made 85 recommendations for changes to procedures in handling cognitively impaired seniors, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has yet to implement some important measures that would prevent a similar tragedy.”

The murders at Casa Verde occurred on the day a cognitively impaired man was admitted to the facility and raised serious questions about staffing levels, admissions of potentially violent seniors to long-term care facilities and the need for thorough screening prior to admission. ONA had standing in the coroner’s inquest; all of its 52 recommendations were endorsed by the jury’s report.

“Ontario’s long-term care facilities aren’t physically structured or appropriately staffed to manage residents with cognitive impairments,” says Haslam-Stroud. “Complicating the matter is the fact that assessment of these residents isn’t done in a coordinated manner.

“These facilities are under-staffed and the too-few registered nurses who work in them are paid less than their colleagues in hospitals, making it difficult to recruit RNs,” she adds.

ONA is working with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to ensure that safety is improved, but more than five years after these seniors were brutally beaten to death at Casa Verde, improvements to staffing levels, wages, training and assessments are not sufficient to prevent a similar incident.

ONA is the union representing 52,500 front-line registered nurses and allied health professionals working in Ontario hospitals, long-term care facilities, public health, the community and industry.

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