



# **MEDIA RELEASE**

## **Ontario Nurses' Association**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 3, 2006

### ***Ontario Nurses Say Long-Term Care Legislation Misses Key Elements: Safe Care Not Possible Without Staffing Standards***

TORONTO – The Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA) says new legislation for long-term care facilities is missing key elements that are essential to safer long-term care environments: minimum staffing standards, improved working conditions and adequate transparency and accountability regarding how public funds are being spent.

“Many of the residents in long-term care are in need of complex nursing care,” says ONA President Linda Haslam-Stroud, RN. “Some facilities have just one registered nurse responsible for the care of 200 or more residents, and not enough staff to provide this care. These residents require the broader skill set that registered nurses bring, and without legislating minimum staffing requirements, care is not going to improve.”

Legislating minimum staffing standards would also improve working conditions in nursing homes.

“Many nurses are not attracted to jobs in long-term care facilities because of horrendous workloads, lower pay and lack of adequate safe equipment,” notes Haslam-Stroud. “The government should be concerned about recruitment and retention issues, especially in light of the coming wave of RN retirements.”

While ONA recognizes that the McGuinty government has invested more funding in long-term care, it believes that more transparency and accountability is needed to ensure that public funding is properly tracked.

“We believe the government should be more vigilant about ensuring that public money is being spent where it is intended,” says Haslam-Stroud. “Privately owned nursing homes must be made to account for the funding they receive from the Ministry.”

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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