



Randy Pettapiece, MPP
Perth-Wellington

Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario

April 26, 2017

Hon. Eric Hoskins, MPP
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
10th Floor, Hepburn Block
80 Grosvenor St
Toronto ON M7A 2C4

Dear Minister:

Re: Closure of Hillside Manor and possible bed transfers to London

Last week it was reported that in a few years, Hillside Manor, a long-term care home near Sebringville, will close its doors. To affected employees, residents and their families, this was extremely upsetting news. People have contacted my office in significant numbers to voice concern. I share their concerns, and I am writing to bring them to your direct attention. We also need clarification on your government's next steps.

Since the announcement, I have requested information from the South West Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) concerning the closure and its implications for long-term care in our area. I have also spoken directly with Hillside Manor's executive director to offer my support for staff and residents. Lastly, on April 21, I spoke with senior staff members from your office.

It is my understanding based on media reports that you are now considering a proposal to transfer 38 of Hillside Manor's 90 beds to London (and that the remainder would apparently be redistributed to other homes in our area). Is this the case? In my conversation with your staff, they assured me of three things: that nothing has been approved to this point; that public consultations are required before a bed license transfer can take place; and that this proposal is currently "under review."

My position is clear: any proposal to transfer beds out of our area should be rejected outright. We understand that Hillside Manor is a private facility. We also understand the need to upgrade ageing long-term care homes that do not meet certain standards. Nevertheless, Hillside Manor's closure must not become an excuse to take beds out of our area. This outcome would be unacceptable to my constituents and to me.

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We need to know more about your government's review process as it concerns Hillside Manor. Our questions include the following:

- Why your government accepted the application to consider the bed transfer;
- Detailed information on your government's process to evaluate it, including timelines;
- Who will be responsible for conducting the public consultations;
- How consultations will be structured and organized;
- When and where information on consultations will be published;
- A timeline for your decision on the Hillside Manor proposal;
- On an historical basis, the number of operator project proposals to transfer beds that you have approved and rejected.

Communication, I believe, was lacking in this instance. When a proposal to transfer beds comes to the government, it should be up to your government—not private operators—to explain the government's process. Local municipalities and MPPs' offices should also be proactively informed. In this case, the only information I received was a letter from the operator, which made no mention of these key questions, or the number of beds slated for transfer or redistribution. Again, this should have been the ministry's priority and responsibility.

We in Perth-Wellington have already lost long-term care beds in Stratford and Harriston, and other homes face uncertain futures. Additional licenses are set to expire in the coming years. Without the necessary investment from the province, I am told that many will be unable to make the upgrades the government requires them to make to stay open.

That puts our area at risk of even more bed losses—despite our larger-than-average share of senior citizens. Across Ontario, I understand the number of people waiting for long-term care is expected to spike to nearly 48,000 in the next six years. We need you to help re-establish the beds we have already lost, and to ensure there will be no further licensed long-term care bed losses in Perth-Wellington.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,


Randy Pettapiece, MPP
Perth-Wellington

c: Jeff Yurek, MPP
Bill Walker, MPP
Lori Van Opstal, Interim Board Chair, South West LHIN
Michael Barrett, CEO, South West LHIN
Joan Fisk, Chair, Waterloo Wellington LHIN
Bruce Lauckner, CEO, Waterloo Wellington LHIN
Thomas G. Wellner, President and CEO, Revera Inc.
Wendy Gilmour, Senior Vice President, Long Term Care, Revera Inc.
Jackie Fritzley, Executive Director, Hillside Manor
Municipalities in Perth-Wellington