

National Pensioners Federation Convention October 5-7, 2021

NPF Health Care Activities Report
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Overview:

In last 18 months we at NPF has focused our health care advocacy on the following issues:

- Long term care and the need for national standards,
- The need for a UN Convention on Rights of Older Persons
- National Pharmacare
- The Patented Medicines Prices Review Board regulations and the need to control drug prices
- The explosive growth of virtual care, the changes in how primary care is being provided to seniors

Long Term Care

- NPF partnered with COSCO BC in putting on 3 national webinars on long term care --- in September 2 March and April 2021. We focused on how to vastly improve the quality of life of seniors in long term care. The speakers were nationally recognized experts in LTC.
- We wrote letters to MPS and MPLs and the PM. We wrote and printed articles from a in the NPF Newsletter from a seniors perspective
- We collaborated and formed alliances with other seniors groups, labour unions on reforming long term care

UN Convention on The Rights of Older Persons

- The proposed UN Convention on the Rights of Older Adults is badly needed.
- The neglect and abuse of seniors in long term care in Canada that was revealed last year was the culmination of many years of underfunding by governments and medical and other professionals that all turned a blind eye.
- In the middle of 2020, CHI reported that over 80 percent of deaths from COVID were of seniors in LTC. That was very much higher than any OECD country. Studies also pointed out that Canada spent much less on seniors care than most other comparable European countries.
- So why is this? This question brought us to the need for our human rights to be protected. We joined a advisory committee on getting a Convention

Pharmacare

- Pharmacare --- We wrote letters, advocated with MPS and MLAs, supported petitions and joined in webinars
- Despite many promises by PM Trudeau that national pharmacare would become a reality, an NDP Bill to introduce Pharmacare was voted down by the Liberals earlier this year.
- We need to keep up our advocacy on this issue. There is some hope.

Virtual Care

- The explosion of virtual care during the pandemic has among other things dramatically affected seniors access to primary care.
- Most primary care physicians now prefer doing telephone consults from home
- Marketing of for-profit primary care services to seniors has increased
- Marginalized and seniors not proficient in English or computer-savvy are likely to be the most badly impacted
- The Canadian health care system has become more inequitable.
- We need to ensure a quality, equitable health care system for all seniors

Home Care

- A major barrier to quality home care for vulnerable seniors that will allow them to remain in their own homes as long as possible is the difficulty in accessing affordable, quality care.
- Special federal funding for home care transferred to the PTs in 2018 had no real accountability measures and does not seem to have led to a direct increase in home care services.
- Accountability by our government is seriously lacking in all seniors health care issues.
- Its our job to hold them accountable. Our lives and those of our amilies depend on that.