



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Personal Support Workers (PSWs) need a permanent pay raise this PSW Day

OCSA invites the public to sign a petition so that PSWs are paid the same regardless of where they work

TORONTO, May 19, 2021 – Today is PSW Day and [Ontario Community Support Association](#) (OCSA) is celebrating the crucial work that PSWs do today and every day, especially during COVID-19. We invite the public to sign [our petition](#) asking the Ontario government to pay PSWs in home and community care the same wages as their counterparts in the health system so that they can continue to keep vulnerable Ontarians safe at home.

PSWs are dedicated and compassionate individuals that should be able to choose where they want to work based on their preferences. Unfortunately, due to years of underfunding, PSWs in home and community care are the lowest paid in the health system, making 19% less than PSWs in hospitals and almost 10% less than PSWs in long-term care. Organizations in our sector have not received regular base funding increases over the past decade, while inflation has increased by over 17%.

“PSWs deserve to be paid a fair wage, no matter who they want to work for in Ontario and this PSW Day we call on the government to make things right by making the temporary wage enhancement permanent and give PSWs in our sector wage equality,” said Deborah Simon, CEO Ontario Community Support Association. “Home and community care agencies have been asked to do more with less year after year and are losing valued staff to other sectors because they do not have the funds to compete.”

Not-for-profit home care agencies are at a breaking point and many of them are unable to provide more support to new people due to lack of staff. Community-based agencies can no longer count on fundraising nor can they expect clients to pick up costs through higher user fees to balance their books. The pandemic has negatively impacted fundraising revenues and left many of the most vulnerable unable to pay. With home and community care not being given additional funds in this year’s budget, we are facing an inevitable crisis.

“We need wage parity for PSWs immediately,” continued Simon. “Without more funds for staff pay as well as base budgets, people are suffering silently at home and caregivers are burning out carrying an unmanageable load.”

Ontarians that want to stay living in their homes and communities are finding it hard to get the support they need to do just that and their caregivers are burnt out. Sign the petition to send a clear message to the government [here](#) and join the conversation using the hashtag #PSWWageEquality on social media.

About OCSA

The Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA) represents close to 230 not-for-profit organizations that provide home care and community support services to over one million Ontarians. Our members help seniors and people with disabilities live independently in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. These proactive and cost-effective services improve quality of life and prevent unnecessary hospitalizations, emergency room visits and premature institutionalization. They are the key to a sustainable health care system for Ontario. For more information, visit www.ocsa.on.ca or [@OCSATweets](https://twitter.com/OCSATweets).

Interviews are available with Deborah Simon, CEO, OCSA. For more information please contact:

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