

Dear Minister Shandro,

We often hear from the leadership of the UCP government that Alberta is a leader among the provinces. We strive to attract business' and create investment opportunities. We like to advertise that we're the province with the lowest taxes and the friendliest to industry.

But are we leaders with respect to governing for the people of Alberta, upon whose shoulders this great province was built? Do we have the best education system, the best social networks, the best medical care for all Albertans, especially those who are in need of such care?

The most vulnerable of our society are the elderly, and I don't think you will dispute that. When the time has come for them to move from their lifelong households to some form of continuing or long term care facility, they - and their families - presume that their needs will be met. Their needs for sustenance, for bodily care and grooming, even companionship to some degree, will be looked after at the place they have either selected or been directed to.

Sadly, the bulk of seniors care in Alberta is provided by either Private for profit, or private for non profit companies. Inevitably then, the standard of care is set by the need to demonstrate a profit to the shareholders and board of directors, often at the cost of the quality of care. This is in contradiction to publicly delivered care, where profit is not the incentive to care for the elderly.

Consequently, in Alberta, we have seen that the majority of Covid 19 cases and deaths occur in the private facilities, not public ones. This was inevitable, and made all the more apparent to the people of Alberta when this public health crisis exposed the fragility of the present system.

I, and many other Albertans, believe that it is now time for Alberta and Alberta Health Services to take back responsibility for all seniors homes, and have one standard applicable for all. One standard for all seniors, and one standard for all our health care providers whether they be working as a health care aide, an LPN, dietary, custodial, or other. Only by ensuring that the standards and levels of care are the same will the fears and concerns of families and seniors be alleviated, and the guess work taken out of 'choosing the right place'.

Mr. Minister, I have heard you state time and time again that Albertans are leaders. Please, then, exert some true leadership and end the privatization of seniors care in Alberta.

I would like to ask that you respond to my letter as soon as you can.

A concerned tax paying citizen of Alberta for over 38 years,

Mike Dempsey
Lac La Biche, Alberta