

Dear Premier Kenney,

The COVID-19 pandemic has made it clear that seniors in for-profit care receive inferior support and suffer worse health outcomes than those in publicly-funded facilities. That's because the profit motive in private systems is directly at odds with spending money on things like adequate staffing or decent pay and benefits. The Canadian Forces report on conditions in facilities in Quebec and Ontario should be a wake-up call across the country, including here in Alberta.

Right now, 79 per cent of Canada's COVID-19 deaths are connected to long term care facilities, and make up the majority of deaths in Alberta. Many seniors lost their lives too soon, and their families have been left to pick up the pieces. **This tragedy lays at the feet of for-profit companies**, because by under-employing workers at low wages in order to maximize profit, care workers were forced to gather hours by working at multiple locations. As we now know, this patchwork system turned out to be **the ideal condition for the spread of the virus**.

It's time to take the profit motive out of seniors' care in Alberta entirely. I am calling on you to take action to eliminate the profit motive from seniors care, and move to a publicly delivered system. Increased privatization led to destabilized working conditions, diminished levels of care, and a general crisis in the sector. The depth of this crisis has now been laid bare by the tragic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

For seniors, for workers, let's make the implementation of publicly delivered seniors' care a positive legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic.

cc:

Tyler Shandro, Minister of Health