

Oral Report of PAC to the Spring 2017 Senate

We continue to monitor the following issues:

- Elder Abuse Ontario
- Canadian Medical Association
- Age friendly communities
- Hydro rates
- CCAC
- Auto Insurance

With regards to auto insurance, we had removed it from our watch list, but a recently released government-commissioned report has revealed that Ontario's auto insurance system is **“one of the least effective in the country, despite having the most expensive premiums and one of the lowest levels of accidents”**.

PAC used between-meeting protocol to reinstate the issue to our watch list. For those of you who have not seen the report and would like to, **the author is provincial auto insurance adviser David Marshall** and it can be found online at:

<http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/autoinsurance/fair-benefits.html>

Other issues, including the right to die and personal support worker to patient ratios (also referred to as levels of care) in long term care facilities, have been brought forward to the Committee by RTO/ERO members. We appreciate that District 2 PAC is working hard on the second issue and is keeping the Provincial Committee updated on its progress. It is most helpful to PAC and the entire RTO/ERO family when a District PAC takes on an issue. Hopefully, we will be able to promote that idea at our September workshop for District PAC Chairs.

Upcoming PAC Workshop:

PAC is in the midst of planning for its upcoming (September 17-18, 2017) provincial workshop. The focus will be primarily two-fold: age-friendly communities and outreach with politicians.

While still in the planning phase, it is proposed that the workshop will start on Sunday evening with a speaker on age-friendly cities who can provide information on the direction taken by the provincial government in this regard. The following day will feature speakers from varying geographical regions discussing how they established their municipalities as age-friendly communities.

Carousel sessions will focus on three topics:

- **Elder abuse,**
- **Update on seniors' health by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, and**
- **Fostering relations with politicians**

Lunch will be followed by liaison group discussions.

Checklist for Age-Friendly Communities

The Committee discussed creating or finding a checklist for age-friendly communities that could be shared with members. After looking at many such lists, it is felt that the most useful checklist for our purposes would appear to be the Age-Friendly Checklist generated by Alberta Health. It

incorporates the original Checklist of Essential Features of Age-Friendly Cities developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) and Age-Friendly Rural and Remote Communities: A Guide developed by the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors. This list recognizes the difficulties posed by the Canadian climate in addition to the factors identified by WHO. In the report in your package, I stated that checklist is available at :

<http://www.seniors-housing.alberta.ca/documents/AgeFriendly-Checklist-2012.pdf>

Cost of Electricity

The high cost of hydro – delivery charges in particular – in Ontario remains a major concern of many RTO/ERO members and seniors in general. While the Provincial Government has taken steps to mitigate the problem, there is still much concern, particularly in rural areas. Hydro costs, therefore, will remain on the Committee's watch list.

Some of the causal factors are:

- transmission and delivery costs: the “why” of urban-rural imbalance with regards to rates
- the need to refurbish aged infrastructure and generation plants : e.g. Darlington nuclear plant = HUGE COSTS
- the election promise to close coal-fired plants and the need to replace them with cleaner sources
- Urban-rural imbalance with regards to rates

District PACs have communicated their Hydro concerns to our committee. One local strategy, in this case a combined effort by the PACs of Districts 43 and 44, was to hold a workshop for members with the aim of disseminating ways to reduce energy costs. An expert from the local hydro utility made a presentation, followed by a question and answer session and round table discussions. PAC believes that hydro rates will be a key issue in the upcoming 2018 provincial election and so monitoring of this issue by PAC should continue. Local PACs are encouraged to follow the Districts 43 and 44 model to help members to be informed.

The hydro situation, however, keeps getting muddied by politics; a recently “leaked” document suggests that in five years, despite the government’s intervention to reduce rates, the rates will eclipse the recent reductions. Opposition parties have jumped on this while the governing party claims that it’s an out-dated document. Who to believe?

A very good explanation of the situation can be found in the article:

Why does Ontario's electricity cost so much? A Reality Check - The Globe and Mail.

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/why-does-electricity-cost-so-much-in-ontario/article33453270/>

PAC is pretty sure that hydro rates will be a major issue in the upcoming provincial election.

Political Advocacy Resource Document

A subcommittee of PAC undertook a review of the provincial Political Advocacy Resource document and revised accordingly. The subcommittee was able to condense the document by a third of the original without substantial changes to the content but, rather, by eliminating redundant material. The Committee has now reviewed and recommended a final draft to the Provincial Executive, with the intent that copies in both official languages will be available in time for the September workshop.

Committee Members:

Paul Brazeau	District 43, Nipissing
Wayne Grosvenor	District 41, Elgin
Louise Guerin	District 44, Région du Ciel Bleu
Sharon Jones	District 5, Cochrane-Temiskaming
Denis Monnin	District 27, Ottawa-Carleton
Linda Taberner	District 28, Region of Durham
Mary Valtellini	District 23, North York
David Kendall	First VP, Executive Liaison to PAC

President Martha Foster regularly attends our meetings along with Executive Director Jim Grieve, Chief Administrative Officer, Simon Leibovitz and Gail Knox, Coordinator RPWs & Special Projects, who acts as recording Secretary.