Sylvia Jones

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Date

Dear Honourable Minister Jones;

Hospice is a palliative care option that I value deeply, and I am writing to express my deepest concern about how Ontario Health is currently funding our hospice services. Hospices provide highly specialized care by dedicated palliative-trained clinical staff in home-like settings, with a level of care, compassion and dignity greatly needed at a critical time of our lives. There is clear evidence that the need for these services continues to increase, and an urgent solution is required to make them sustainable.

It is well-known that the cost of a hospice bed is less than half the cost of a hospital bed and that hospices must abide by many of the same legislative and regulatory processes of any government funded healthcare organization. Hospices are also the main source of OHIP covered Grief and Bereavement services in Ontario. Experience has taught us that if bereavement is ignored it has high potential to contribute to mental health issues and decreased productivity of those affected.

Ontario Health promotes its mandate to deliver a person-centered model of care and yet hospices in Ontario, which deliver a growing and critical level of care during the most difficult stage of life, continue to be seriously underfunded, with hospices left to raise outrageous amounts of money through donations and grants in order to sustain and grow their services.

Today I am asking that you, as the Deputy Premier and Minister of Health for Ontario, to take immediate action. **We need you to strongly advocate for our hospices and encourage your government to fund hospices appropriately and adequately** **to ensure all Ontarians have the opportunity to choose how they want their palliative or end-of-life journey to unfold**.

I want to know that I will have the opportunity to choose hospice care when my time comes and that my loved ones will be supported throughout my journey. We need your support. Thank you for standing up for hospice care and the right to die with dignity.

Respectfully,