

May 25, 2020

Premier Doug Ford
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON
M7A 1A1

OPEN LETTER

Dear Premier Ford,

As a broad group of healthcare stakeholders whose members employ tens of thousands of front line workers in the fight against COVID 19, we write to you today to seek immediate clarity on the implementation details and timing of the release of pandemic pay to support frontline workers employed by organizations funded by the Ministry of Health and the LHINs.

On April 25th, we each applauded the Government of Ontario's announcement that frontline workers would be recognized with temporary pandemic pay for the current challenges they face keeping Ontarians healthy, safe and informed during the pandemic.

A month later, it is still not clear whether the efforts of all of our healthcare workers will be recognized or if pandemic pay is restricted to a subset of employees. Also, funding has yet to flow to the front line and in fact for those front-line workers whose organizations are funded by the Ministry of Health and/or LHINs have yet to receive clarity on whether or not they will be considered front line workers eligible for pandemic pay. This is contributing to extreme morale issues at the front line at a time when staff need to be supported most. It is also creating unnecessary conflict for employers who are left trying to explain to their employees why they cannot provide neither clarity nor the pay itself.

Together, we are urging the Provincial Government to immediately communicate the implementation details, including confirmation that the funding is for all workers on the frontline, and release funding so that frontline workers can start to see the benefit now while the economy is opening up and they are still hard at work to contain the pandemic.

Additionally, to recognize the critical services provided and the team effort required in fighting COVID-19, we continue to urge that pandemic pay be applied to all non-management front line providers, including regulated frontline staff.

Every day, it becomes increasingly difficult to see this great initiative, that has such great promise for health care worker recognition, be undermined by delay.

We thank you for your attentiveness to our request and look forward to your reply.

Yours truly,

(Original Signed By)

Justin J. Bates, CEO, Ontario Pharmacists Association
Anthony Dale, CEO, Ontario Hospital Association
Lisa Levin, CEO, AdvantAge Ontario
Kavita Mehta, CEO, Association of Family Health Teams of Ontario
Kimberly Moran, CEO, Children's Mental Health Ontario
Camille Quenneville, CEO, Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario
Deborah Simon, CEO, Ontario Community Support Association
Adrienne Spafford, CEO, Addictions and Mental Health Ontario
Adrianna Tetley, CEO, Alliance for Healthier Communities
Alisha Tharani, Executive Director, Mental Health Partners
Samantha Yau, President, Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists Ontario Branch

Cc:

Hon. Peter Bethlanfalvy, President of the Treasury Board
Hon. Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health
James Wallace, Chief of Staff to the Premier
Mark Lawson, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Premier
Karl Baldauf, Chief of Staff to the President of the Treasury Board
Leif Mallings, Chief of Staff to the Deputy Premier and Minister of Health