

Good Day Commissioner Gillese

Due to health issues I am unable to be present nevertheless our thoughts and friendly recommendations will be read by our legal counsel, Paul Scott relating to the death of my mother, Helen Matheson.

1. First of all we want to sincerely thank you Commissioner and your entire team for the incredible work throughout the Inquiry as well as the witnesses all of which we were able to watch via webcast.
2. This has been an emotional journey for both myself and my wife, Patricia Houde that whether we liked it or not took us to emotional places such as frustration, disbelief, irritation, confusion, anxiety and at times complete and utter shock!
3. The fact that the fundamental principle to be applied in the interpretation of the Long-Term Care Home Act and the Regulation is that a **HOME** is primarily the home of its residents and is to be operated so that it is a place where its residents may live with dignity and in security, safety and comfort and have their physical, psychological, social, spiritual and cultural needs adequately met leads us to question how do we rebuild our trust in a system which failed to do just that.
4. Throughout the Inquiry we heard from various persons working within the Long-Term Care Home System. At times we were overwhelmed by the lack of communication and cooperation between all the stakeholders or the inability to accept responsibility for what may have lead to a totally different outcome. Of course we will never know!
5. As we heard Ms. Wettlaufer began her career in nursing using and abusing narcotics stolen at her place of employment in 1995.
6. As a result she was fired. Nevertheless her record showed she had resigned and continued working. Even though she was known to neglect residents, Administer wrong medications, was reckless, stole residents' medications, used and abused drugs and alcohol all leading to sloppy work.

I trust we all understand and agree that Ms. Wettlaufer crossed the line over and over murdering eight people, attempting to murder four others and assaulting two others until 2014.

7. This brings us to ask are we not responsible to be truthful no matter the consequences? There is a responsibility to protect we acknowledge that. However when working with out most vulnerable, feeble

and sometimes individuals who are no longer capable of speaking for themselves we must ask that the truth be forthcoming. Furthermore, we respectfully insist there is no potential for cover ups within the Long-Term Care Homes.

8. We strongly suggest that everyone keep a watchful eye and that without fear or reprisal we act accordingly. It is without question, the responsibility of owner/Operators of Long-Term Care Homes to follow the strict requirements set out in the LTCHA in reporting to the College of Nurses, making certain the RN or RPN self reports and a full inspection follow.

9. This leads me to ask why the Ontario Coroner's office would not investigate allegations concerning the suspicious death of two residents while Ms. Wettlaufer was employed at Caressant Care? As Professor Yorker so adequately stated "We must raise awareness about the fact it happened and it can happen".

One might say it is an impossible task to ask that the Coroner perform an autopsy after the death of every resident in Long-Term Care Homes. Nevertheless we are left with the question as to why not?

10. We strongly suggest that verbal and/or written recommendations need to be honest and truthful allowing any future employer to make a well informed decision when hiring staff in future.

11. This brings us to the ration of RN or RPN staffing in Long-Term Care Homes for which there never seemed to be a clear answer even though our counsel asked that question. Nevertheless, Professor Yorker did note that as a "Result of less nursing staff the rate of patient mortality went up by seven percent" which gives way for concern.

As a result we ask that beginning with the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, all stake holders as well as tax payers have a role in setting new requirements – staff to resident ratios in hopes that one RN never again has 32 residents on her/his shift .

12. We respectfully recommend that consideration be given to the May 28, 2018 College of Nurses paper on identifying risks: learning from the literature of health care serial killers as well as professor Yorker's testimony and evidence as presented - expert review for the public inquiry into the safety and security of residents in the long-term care homes system.

13. There are many other points we would have liked to raise. However, we will hand that task over to the other seven families who also lost their loved ones at the hand of Elizabeth Wettlaufer.

14. For me, having sat by my mother's bedside the night of October 25, 2011 not knowing she'd been injected with a lethal dose of insulin causing her to pass away the morning of October 26, 2011 will live with me the rest of my life. There simply are no words to express the amount of guilt I carry wondering what more could I, what more should I have done that might have prevented the murder of my mother?

15. I am grateful that my wife empathizes with my pain and my anger at times and that I have amazing family support but I know at the end of the day as I try to move forward there may be days when the five stages of grief come calling.

16. There has been and will continue to be great emotional, psychological and spiritual trauma but I never expected the physical toll this would take on me which it surely has indeed. As I stated earlier the physical toll has prevented me from participating today. However, we would like to thank our legal counsel Paul Scott and his team who have taken this journey with us.

17. So where do we go from here?

18. We believe it is urgent that once the report is written and passed on to our government in 2019 that we have the responsibility to work together to make certain this never happens again in a long-term care home, that no families experience what we eight families have experienced and that our loved ones live with dignity, in security, safety and comfort and have their physical, psychological, social, spiritual and cultural needs adequately met.

19. In closing we would like to reiterate your opening remarks commissioner "in many ways, this inquiry is about healing - healing our broken trust in the long-term care system. I most sincerely hope that through these public hearings, the Ontario public begins to feel heard and therefore begins to heal".

- Thank you, Jon Matheson and Patricia Houde -