

Paths to Strengthen Long-term Care Worker Resilience

We interviewed long-term care and assisted living workers about their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic, and identified eight workplace practices to help others plan and prepare for future pandemic and crisis response.



Be on the ground, accessible, and act as an advocate for your team to positively impact their experience.

Leadership and management can support workers' mental health during a crisis.



Cooperate, as it can be a source of strength.

Working under intense strain can provoke tensions in the workplace, but can also propel appreciation and support for co-workers.



Make every effort to include essential care partners in care, even during crisis conditions.

Care isn't only a physical act; emotional and spiritual care matter greatly and require inclusion of essential care partners.



Prioritize peer support resources.

Workers often feel other healthcare workers can uniquely understand what they experience at work. Create an environment conducive to peer support by ensuring staff have the time and opportunity to demonstrate care for each other all while being mindful that providing peer support can be an added demand.



Communicate often, and in multiple formats, to create more learning opportunities for workers.

During crisis situations, communication is ever changing yet this can be used to promote an atmosphere of mutual teaching rather than policing.



Recognize worker skills and sacrifice.

Workers need and value feeling appreciated by society and by their workplaces. Workers need encouragement and support in caring for their mental health, both in and outside the workplace.



Make resources for long-term care workers transparent and equally accessible.

Ensure frontline workers have the same access to information and resources as management and allied health professionals.



Provide adequate resources to help prevent moral distress.

Staffing shortages and inadequate personal protective equipment lead to worker distress and create conditions that increase vulnerability to outbreaks and reduced standards of care.

Learn more

More details on what we learned through interviewing workers can be found in the [Staffing in Long-Term Care During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Insights, Lessons and Paths Forward executive summary](#).

Learn how Healthcare Excellence Canada is supporting long-term care homes to work together to build better care with and for people and working in long-term care in Canada through the [Reimagining LTC program](#).

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