



Good morning, everyone.

Let me first thank the minister for inviting me on stage today to participate in this wonderful announcement which I'm convinced will go a long way in helping to resolve our health human resources crisis in B.C.

Before I continue, I'd like to also acknowledge my Board Chair Aly Devji who has worked his entire career in seniors care at Delta View and is a strong advocate for the sector.

I'd also like to recognize the amazing staff who work here at three links each and every day as well as the Hospital Employees' Union that represent them.

The BC Care Providers are not only proud to have Three Links as one of our long-standing members—its CEO Dave Hurford is on our board as well as the chair of the board for SafeCare BC.

Minister Dix, let me first say, thank you.

Thank you for listening.

Thank you for acting upon a series of recommendations the BC Care Providers and our sector as a whole have made to you regarding the important need to address the critical challenge of both recruiting and retaining staff within care homes across the province.

I started in my post as CEO seven years ago. At that time, the issue of recruiting and hiring enough care aides, LPNs and RNs within our member sites was just beginning to bubble up to the surface.

It's important to note when Minister Dix took over the health portfolio a few years ago, within days, he reached out and began an important dialogue with B.C.'s care providers.

Since then, he's always had an open door policy.

In fact, he not only returns your phone calls, he's often the one being proactive and reaching out, asking how we can work more closely together and come up with the solutions that will address the critical needs of our seniors.

Whether it was his participation in our continuing care collaborative a couple of years ago which focused on health human resources, or his recent attendance at our board meeting to discuss the same topic. I know the minister is genuinely interested in working with us to find solutions.

It's not always easy being the minister of health. It's a challenging post that requires someone who can stickhandle through some very thorny and complex files.

Today's announcement and changes to the manner in which Canadian trained care aides can find a new pathway to the care aide registry is testimony to this minister's commitment to get things done.

It's a testimony to the provincial government's commitment to look beyond the status quo.

Today's announcement not only ensures that high standards are being maintained, it also solidifies that our members—B.C.'s care providers—are being treated like true partners in the delivery of seniors care in our province.

There are many days I thought I might not get on stage here talking about these reforms to the care aide registry. But here I am.

These reforms will eliminate barriers, reduce red tape, lower the costs to Canadian trained care aides who want to work in B.C. and increase labour mobility.

But most importantly, the reforms announced today will help to ensure that when a senior needs care, it will be there when and where they need it.

Once again, thank you minister and I know the new pathway you have introduced today and the recent investments your government has made to increase the number of training spots in public post-secondary institutions are welcome news to our members, care workers and most importantly the thousands of seniors they serve each and every day.

****Please check against delivery.****