Personal Support Work and Home Care in Ontario during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Services de soutien personnel et soins à domicile en Ontario pendant la pandémie de COVID-19

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Appendix 1

Interview Guide

WORK EXPERIENCE
1. What is your official job title?
2. How long have you been in this position?
3. How long would you say you have worked in this field?
4. Can you tell me briefly about your role at your workplace?

NATURE OF EXPERT KNOWLEDGE
1. What policy related to home care, personal support workers (PSWs) or client safety might you deal with through your work? Can you provide an example?
   i. What was your role with regard to this policy? For instance, were you involved with its development, evaluation or analysis?

SPECIFIC POLICY KNOWLEDGE
1. Can you describe for me any policy that you are aware of that relates to PSW-provided home care in Ontario (e.g., Ministry of Health and Ministry of Long-Term Care; Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development; legislation; Local Health Integration Network [LHIN]; service provider organization [SPO])? If appropriate for role/expertise:
   i. Do you know how/why that policy was created, or who would have been involved in developing that?
   ii. Who might that policy directly affect?
   iii. Can you tell me how that policy is enforced?
VIEWS OF POLICY

1. In your view, what are the key policies that protect clients?
   i. What are policies that work well?
      a. Why? If not provided already, can you give an example?
   ii. What about policies that do not work well?
      Why? If not provided already, can you give an example?

2. How do you think current policy influences PSW-provided home care?
   i. What parties might this policy affect? (e.g., LHINs, SPOs, PSWs, families)
   ii. If appropriate:
      a. What effects could this have on PSWs?
      b. What effects could this have on client safety?

3. In what ways does policy shape homecare client safety?

4. What policies do you think help ensure safety during the interactions of PSWs and homecare client safety?

5. Given that there is no regulatory professional body for PSWs, what are your thoughts about the safety of homecare clients?
   i. Is training adequate? (e.g., thoughts about effectiveness of the 2014 introduction of standard education)
   ii. What can you tell me about PSW supervision? (e.g., thoughts about SPOs supervising PSWs)
   iii. (If appropriate for the participant’s role) A provincial registry effort stopped in 2016, and the Michener Institute “pilot” project ceased in 2019. My understanding is that most documentation is at the client case level, and the MOHLTC or LHINs do not track complaints about PSWs or other workers. Can you speak to this at all? (e.g., how can we be confident of PSWs’ performance or track record?)

6. What are your perspectives on the adequacy of “specific policy” or “policy related to home care in general?”

7. If any new policy could be implemented to improve PSW homecare provision as it affects client safety, what would that be?

8. What do you consider a policy gap or concerning or a risk in PSW-provided homecare client safety?
COVID-19 and policy

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND HOMECARE CLIENTS’ SAFETY
1. How do you think homecare clients’ safety has been handled during the COVID-19 pandemic?
   i. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen disproportionate effects for long-term care (LTC) residents. To your awareness, what measures have been taken to protect homecare clients?
      If needed, prompt: How do you feel homecare client health and safety risk compares with LTC residents?

2. The risk of cross-site transmission of COVID-19 led to calls for healthcare workers to work in only one site. Do you know how this was addressed in the homecare sector?
   i. Based on your expertise, were those measures adequate protection?
   ii. How do you think this might have been handled better?

WRAP UP
1. Based on the topic of this research and your expert knowledge, do you have any thoughts about how this study might be improved or additional items I should consider?
2. Is there anything I may have missed, or that you would like to comment on?