

# “It’s as Stupid as Funding!” Understanding Retention of Long-Term Care Workers

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## BACKGROUND

With the older adult population set to increase to 20.3% of the population over the next 23 years, we need to consider who will care for Long Term Care Workers who are the hinge pins for the proper functioning of these homes. The aim was to better understand if the initiatives in the ‘Fixing Long Term Care Act’ (The Act) had any positive impacts that resulted in increased retention for Long Term Care Home Workers in the Greater Toronto Area. Elements of focus were:

- 📌 Increased inspections
- 📌 Employees experiencing a positive work environment
- 📌 Improvement in care to the residents

## METHODS

### Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews, online using cloud-based software: WebEx and Otter.ai

### Analysis

Transcripts were analyzed using open coding

### Ethics

Non-probability snowball recruitment was used to ensure participants did not feel pressure to participate

### The participants:

- 📌 Women
- 📌 Ages ranged from 24 to 48yrs
- 📌 Still work or have worked in LTC homes in the GTA in the last 3yrs

## KEY FINDINGS

### Why they left:

#### Team conflict

A lack of team cohesion and bullying was identified especially towards new hires

#### Negative emotional impacts:

Helplessness felt from witnessing the neglect of the residents

#### Barriers to the workflow of essential tasks:

Lack of staff and lack of supplies

#### Monetary compensation and workload intensity mismatch:

Workers felt undervalued

One participant boldly stated the answer to retention and recruitment in Long Term Care:

“It’s as stupid as funding!”

### Why they stay:

The bond formed with residents and family  
Altruistic drive to benefit society

A participant disclosed the motivation that keeps her there:

“I can’t quit. I love them too much.”

## DISCUSSION

### Other studies found similar workforce stressors:

- Lack of team cohesion
- Imbalance in the intensity of workload compared to monetary compensation

### Unique findings from this research:

- The Emotional toll
- Trauma experienced by workers, Uniqueness of the bond created with residents and their families

## IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND/OR PRACTICE

More funding is required for:

- 📌 Supplies
- 📌 Increased wages
- 📌 Investment into anti-bullying strategies for every home

One participant reported never experiencing an inspection, has left their position and believes most LTC homes need better oversight. we can conclude The Act has not resulted in a positive impact on retention

## REFERENCES