

**The Ontario Retirement Communities Association Encourages the Government to Strengthen the COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination for All Health Care Workers and Make ALL Seniors Living in Retirement Homes Eligible to Receive the Booster Shot this Fall**

Oakville – Today, Cathy Hecimovich, CEO, of the Ontario Retirement Communities Association (ORCA), on behalf of the ORCA Board and the 60,000 seniors who choose to live in retirement homes issued the following statement following Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health’s announcement of a Mandatory Vaccination Policy and third-dose COVID-19 booster shots.

“We want to thank the Ontario Government for implementing a mandatory vaccination policy for all healthcare workers, including retirement home staff and any other external healthcare providers entering retirement homes. This is a very important step in keeping our seniors and team members safe.

We encourage the Ontario government to look to other provinces such as British Columbia, where mandatory vaccination policies are even more rigorous and have led to significant increases in vaccination of healthcare staff to further strengthen the approach in Ontario.

The Association is pleased to see that some of our seniors are eligible to receive third-dose COVID-19 booster shots. Seniors living in retirement homes received their first dose close to eight months ago now, and we call on the government to include **ALL** retirement home residents so that the 60,000 seniors living in retirement homes are eligible for their booster shot this Fall. This would also greatly help facilitate the administration of the booster shot to immune-compromised seniors who may experience challenges navigating the healthcare system.”

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**About ORCA:**

Since 1977, the Ontario Retirement Communities Association (ORCA) has been the voice of Ontario’s retirement communities and we remain committed to setting a standard for operational excellence in the sector.

ORCA is a voluntary, not-for-profit association that represents more than 95% of all licensed retirement community suites in Ontario, with members caring for nearly 60,000 seniors who choose to call retirement communities their home. Further, ORCA members employ over 30,000 Ontarians who are steadfast in their devotion to the difference the sector can make to each of its residents.

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