

Additionally, the cost of a hospital acute care bed being occupied by an Alternative Level of Care (ALC) patient is a cost the system cannot afford. Providing community care to treat these patients at home or in a long-term care home makes good health care sense, will better meet the needs of patients, and is fiscally responsible.

Measures to enhance capacity in these sectors include:

- increasing investments in home care and community services by an average of four per cent annually for the next three years or \$526 million per year by 2014–15, to better support those seniors and other Ontarians who could benefit from care provided in the community;
- development of a new Seniors Strategy that will expand house calls, increase access to home care, and provide improved care coordination;
- care coordinators to provide seniors, particularly those with complex conditions, with guidance by working closely with all health care providers. Seniors will be directed to the care they need, in the appropriate setting. This will improve the coordination of care for seniors living at home and help avoid unnecessary hospital admissions;
- investments in chronic care services provided in the community to ease pressure on long-term care homes' waiting lists and help reduce the number of ALC patients in hospitals;
- moving forward with the proposed Healthy Homes Renovation Tax Credit to help seniors adapt their homes to meet their needs as they age and allowing them to live at home and independently for as long as possible, provided this *Budget* is passed by the legislature; and
- building on the significant investments made in long-term care since 2003 to create capacity in the sector, increasing overall long-term care home funding by 2.8 per cent in 2012–13. Included in this growth is a one per cent increase in direct care costs for long-term care home residents. The government will help the sector manage this growth by providing home operators with greater flexibility to pay for services from within their current funding structure.