



March 25, 2020

The Honourable Doug Ford, M.P.P.  
Premier of Ontario  
6th Floor, Whitney Block  
99 Wellesley Street West  
Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1A1

**Re: Essential Services and Supports for Ontarians Living with ALS**

Dear Premier Ford,

I am writing to express appreciation for the Government of Ontario's commitment on March 23, 2020, of \$200 million in social services relief funding to help protect the health and safety of the province's most vulnerable people during the COVID-19 pandemic. While we understand that funding will be distributed by municipal service managers, we are concerned that a charity like ours – that supports a vulnerable population throughout Ontario, by filling critical gaps within the formal healthcare system – may not be addressed in the proposed fiscal response programs.

In this time of crisis, the services of health charities are even more vital, the demands greater, and donor support to carry out day-to-day operations even more challenged. As a 100% donor-funded charity, ALS Canada is anticipating a drop in our revenues of 40 to 60 per cent as we cannot hold our community event fundraisers which are such a critical aspect of our fundraising initiatives.

**The support services we are providing during the COVID-19 crisis are helping to keep people with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) and their caregivers, safely in their homes, thereby reducing the burden on the strained healthcare system. We need the government to identify financial relief programs for health charities that operate at a provincial, not municipal, level.**

Aligned with the services and support we provide to deliver on our mission, here are some examples of the vital support ALS Canada is offering during the COVID-19 pandemic to the approximately 1,000 Ontarians and their caregivers living with this progressive neurodegenerative disease, which results in progressive paralysis and eventually the loss of the ability to move, to speak and to breathe:

- We are providing psychological and emotional support, mobility equipment, and information gathering and dissemination. These services reduce the strain on the healthcare system or fill a gap where there is no longer any healthcare support for our community.
- Our Regional Managers, throughout the province, are remotely connecting with every person living with ALS we serve, their families and caregivers to provide psychological and emotional support – listening to concerns, problem solving and identifying needs we can then work to address. Within the first two weeks of the Ontario State of Emergency, they will have been in touch with 1000 people.

- Support groups virtually bring together people affected by ALS, so they are not alone during this time of social isolation helping to improve the mental health of people living with ALS and their caregivers who are even more burdened at this time.
- The ALS Canada equipment program provides loaned equipment, like hospital beds, lift chairs, wheelchairs, bathroom equipment and lifts, for longer time periods than the LHINs provide. This equipment is essential in enabling people to stay safely in their home, reducing risk of injury to people living with ALS and their caregivers, and keeping them out of the healthcare system.
- ALS Canada is convening and facilitating conference calls with the multi-disciplinary teams from the five ALS clinics in the province and connecting them with the clinics across Canada, so they can provide updates, share information, collectively problem-solve and identify emerging issues.

ALS Canada is a 100% donor-funded organization that provides essential support, services and information to a vulnerable population. Now more than ever, as donors are unable to support our organization during the COVID-19 crisis, financial support from the government would be a substantial provision in helping us make sure Ontarians living with ALS remain safely in their homes and out of the hospital, reducing the strain on the healthcare system during this time of crisis.

We hope to confirm that health charities like ours will either qualify for existing financial assistance like what was announced on March 23, or that another funding mechanism will be available to provide relief to organizations like ours that operate outside the formal healthcare system yet play an essential role in its delivery by supporting a vulnerable population with unique needs. Attached for your reference please find the letter sent to Minister Elliot on the same topic.

Thank you for considering this request. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Tammy Moore, CEO

Cc:

The Honourable Christine Elliott, Minister of Health

The Honourable Todd Smith, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services

Enclosure



March 25, 2020

The Honourable Christine Elliott, M.P.P.  
Minister of Health  
College Park 5th Floor, 777 Bay Street  
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

**Re: Essential Services and Supports for Ontarians Living with ALS**

Dear Minister Elliott,

I am writing to express appreciation for the Government of Ontario's commitment on March 23, 2020, of \$200 million in social services relief funding to help protect the health and safety of the province's most vulnerable people during the COVID-19 pandemic. While we understand that funding will be distributed by municipal service managers, we are concerned that a charity like ours – that supports a vulnerable population throughout Ontario, by filling critical gaps within the formal healthcare system – may not be addressed in the proposed fiscal response programs.

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**The support services we are providing during the COVID-19 crisis are helping to keep people with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) and their caregivers, safely in their homes, thereby reducing the burden on the strained healthcare system. We need the government to identify financial relief programs for health charities that operate at a provincial, not municipal, level.**

Approximately 1,000 Ontarians are currently living with ALS, a progressive neurodegenerative disease resulting in progressive paralysis and eventually the loss of the ability to move, to speak and to breathe. Aligned with the services and support we provide to deliver on our mission, here are some examples of the vital support ALS Canada is offering during the COVID-19 pandemic to Ontario's ALS community:

- We are providing psychological and emotional support, mobility equipment, and information gathering and dissemination. These services reduce the strain on the healthcare system or fill a gap where there is no longer any healthcare support for our community.
- Our Regional Managers, throughout the province, are remotely connecting with every person living with ALS we serve, their families and caregivers to provide psychological and emotional support – listening to concerns, problem solving and identifying needs we can then work to address. Within the first two weeks of the Ontario State of Emergency, they will have been in touch with 1000 people.
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We hope to confirm that health charities like ours will either qualify for existing financial assistance like what was announced on March 23, or that another funding mechanism will be available to provide relief to organizations like ours that operate outside the formal healthcare system yet play an essential role in its delivery by supporting a vulnerable population with unique needs. Attached for your reference please find the letter sent to Minister Todd Smith on the same topic.

Thank you for considering this request. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tammy Moore', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tammy Moore, CEO

Cc:

The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario

The Honourable Todd Smith, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services

Enclosure



March 25, 2020

The Honourable Todd Smith, M.P.P.  
Minister of Children, Community and Social Services  
7th Floor, 438 University Avenue  
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

**Re: Ontario Protecting the Most Vulnerable During COVID-19 Crisis**

Dear Minister Smith,

I am writing to express appreciation for the Government of Ontario's commitment on March 23, 2020, of \$200 million in social services relief funding to help protect the health and safety of the province's most vulnerable people during the COVID-19 pandemic. While we understand that funding will be distributed by municipal service managers, we are concerned that a charity like ours – that supports a vulnerable population throughout Ontario, by filling critical gaps within the formal healthcare system – may not be addressed in the proposed fiscal response programs.

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We hope you will confirm that health charities like ours qualify for financial assistance. I welcome the opportunity to discuss at your earliest convenience how the government's March 23 funding announcement can help people and families affected by ALS during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

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Tammy Moore, CEO

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The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario

The Honourable Christine Elliott, Minister of Health