



**Colonel Scott F. Malcolm**

Deputy Surgeon General, Canadian Forces Health Services Group

**Major Karoline Martin**

Chief Standards Officer, Canadian Forces Health Services Training Centre

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## Opening Remarks

Madame Chair, and members of the Standing Committee on National Defence, it is with great honour and privilege to be here today along with Major Karoline Martin and I thank you for the invitation to discuss elements of the Canadian Forces Health Services deployment into Ontario's Long Term Care Facilities supporting Canada's most vulnerable, in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis.

As you have heard in previous testimony, Operation LASER saw the deployment of hundreds of Health Services personnel. Nurses, Medical Technicians, Medical Assistants, Physician Assistants and Dental personnel all came together to form a composite teams known as Augmented Civilian Care (ACC) Teams. As the Director of Health Services Operations I was the architect behind the medical aspects of the plan that saw the ACC teams deploy into long-term care facilities in Ontario. Major Martin had the distinct pleasure to deploy as the Officer Commanding the ACC Teams within Ontario.

From April to August, we deployed into seven Long Term Care Facilities with the primary mission and goal of saving Canadian lives. Upon our arrival, we witnessed a sector in crisis. Our clinicians and CAF personnel immediately mobilized and began to work tirelessly alongside our civilian health partners to stabilize the situation and support not only residents but the organizations and clinicians we were deployed to support.

Although CAF personnel are not experts within the Long Term Care sector, we responded to the call during a critical moment in Canadian history. Clinical excellence, compassion and patient advocacy are the cornerstone ethical principles all CAF clinicians live by and as such when concerns regarding the conditions and the standards of practice arose, we as Canadians, clinicians and as soldiers had a clear duty to report our observations. I would like to stress that our observations are only a snapshot in time that reflected the realities within the Long Term Care Facilities in which we worked during the early stages of the COVID-19 crisis.

The CAF Health Services personnel who deployed on Operation LASER are a passionate and dedicated group of clinicians who will always advocate for patient and resident well-being and the provision of high quality healthcare to Canadians. It is with this lens of systemic improvement that we graciously accept your questions and queries.

We thank you once again for this opportunity and look forward to your questions.