



For immediate release

Budget delivers hopeful investments in Continuing Care

Edmonton, October 28, 2015. Alberta's continuing care providers are welcoming the announcements in the 2015-16 Alberta budget which support home care and long-term care. Consultation with industry is needed to ensure these measures are implemented successfully and to begin to address many of the long-term challenges the sector is facing.

"We are asking to work with the government to find ways of ensuring that the needs of Albertans are met," says Tammy Leach, Chief Executive Officer of the Alberta Continuing Care Association (ACCA).

The government's investment in home care is welcome. The budget committed \$30 million in 2016-17 and \$60 million in 2017-18 to phase-in a new model for expanded public homecare.

"We are also pleased to see the funding for the new long-term spaces," said Leach. The budget committed \$40 million in 2016-17 and \$80 million in 2017-18 toward the costs of operating 2,000 new public long-term care spaces. There were also increasing supports for seniors to support independent living.

Unfortunately, the budget did not address continuing care or the approach to funding for current spaces and services. "After multiple years of funding which has lagged behind costs, many other issues need to be discussed and addressed," said Leach.

"ACCA wants to work with the government as quickly as we can on two issues which were not addressed in the budget," said Leach. "The first is the funding for ASLI (the Alberta Supportive Living Initiative) projects carried over from the previous government that are on hold. The second is clarifying the reference to "public" care spaces. Historically, more than 60% of Alberta's care is provided by non-profit, faith-based and private care providers," she said. According to recent reports released from the Health Quality Council of Alberta (HQCA), site ownership (public, voluntary, private) has no influence on resident or family experience and all care providers are held to the same standards and regulations.

Many issues need to be addressed to meet the needs of Albertans. "As an industry we are proud of the level of care we provide to seniors and other residents. We are concerned about our ability to sustain that quality," Leach said.

For information about the continuing care industry and the Alberta Continuing Care Association, please refer to the attached backgrounder.

For more information, contact:

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Continuing Care in Alberta

Growing Need

- There are 470,000 seniors over 65 in Alberta, expected to grow to 1.13 million in 2035. Currently there are 200,000 seniors over 75.
- 12 % of seniors over 75 need some level of seniors' care. That's 24,000 spaces for this age group alone (does not count spaces for Albertans under 75 requiring care).
- Alberta currently has less than 23,000 continuing care spaces.
- Alberta has the highest dementia rate and the youngest onset of dementia in Canada.

Streams of Continuing Care

Continuing care operators deliver human comfort and quality service to Alberta's seniors and vulnerable adults in three ways.

Home Care	Designated Supportive Living (DSL)	Long Term Care(LTC)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive services at home. • Assessment is performed by qualified professionals to determine needs. • Services are then provided on a scheduled basis. • Can include nursing & rehabilitation, and personal support services like homemaking, bathing, grooming. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation services with other supports and care. • Meets the needs of a wide range of people, but not those with complex needs requiring a registered nurse (RN) on-site 24 hours a day. • Provisions can include meals, housekeeping, and social activities. Professional and personal support services also available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care is provided for people with complex health needs who are unable to remain at home or in supportive living. • LTC settings provide accommodation, personal support and health care services. • 24 hour care with an RN on-site.

Funding

- Current rates of funding are below what was received in 2011 after inflation and cost increases are factored in.
 - Funding increases received in 2011/2012 – 2012/2013: 0%
 - Funding increases received in 2012/2013 – 2013/2014: 0 – 2%
 - Funding increases received in 2014/2015 – 2015/2016: 0%
- Continuing care is funded 19% below the national average while acute care is funded 33% above.
- Each operator, regardless of ownership type, receives the same funding for their respective care settings.

Structure

- Multiple ownership structures include public, private, non-profit or faith-based operations.
- All operators are held to the same standards and requirements.
- Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) data indicates that ownership type has no influence on the resident or family experience.
- Accommodation fees are the second lowest in Canada.

Emerging Issues

- Albertans expect excellent care when and where they need it.
- Seniors continue to occupy acute care spaces in hospitals.
- Health and safety needs are becoming increasing complex as Albertans are living longer.
- Sustainable funding across all three streams of care is needed.
- Aging homes: greater than 50% of Long Term Care homes are 30 years or older.

About ACCA

The Alberta Continuing Care Association represents a unique alliance of providers in Alberta's Continuing Care sector. Member Organizations employ over 16,000 Albertans and care for more than 46,000 seniors and persons requiring continuing care. Our Members provide care and services for 14,000 LTC and DSL spaces and over 5.3 million hours of Home Care to Albertans.