



BC Care  
Providers  
ASSOCIATION



# A 2020 Vision for Seniors' Care

BC Care Providers Association | 2020 Budget Submission

June 2019

**Dear Members of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services:**

Everyday, hard working British Columbians are struggling to support the seniors in their lives. They are facing challenges such as long waitlists, staff shortages and continuing care models that are focused on tasks rather than on helping seniors have the best day possible.

**In the short-term, British Columbians need affordable services that people can count on to make their lives better.**

Families need to know that seniors' care in our province is of the utmost quality. As outlined in this submission, strengthening the services people rely on, by investing in quality of life programs, such as the Seniors Quality of Life Fund and the Seniors Safety and Quality Improvement Program, can help do this.

However, good care is not possible without qualified workers. Despite an increasing need for seniors' care, our province is experiencing a chronic health human resource shortage. Immediate government action is needed, particularly in terms of investing in skills training to better meet the demands of B.C.'s labour market. In addressing the problem before us, we will need to apply innovative solutions, including the expansion of dual credit programs, which provide young people with a pathway to fulfilling jobs in this rewarding sector. This is particularly important, as typically, dual credit programs have been focused to male dominated sectors, such as welding or automotive.

**In the longer-term, if we think the province is struggling to meet the needs of seniors and their caregivers now, well, in the words of one Baby Boomer, *"We ain't seen nothin' yet."***

As more British Columbians become seniors, our province will require substantially more long-term care beds. In fact, Canada will need to nearly double its long-term care capacity by 2035.

Just as investments in childcare are prerequisite to their parents' abilities to fully participate in the workforce, the availability of seniors' care is cornerstone to citizens being able to continue to work as their parents age. As such, BCCPA has recommended that the 2020 Provincial Budget earmark funding for 5,000 new long-term care beds and 1,000 new assisted living suites.

The policy and funding decisions we are making now will have impacts for all of us – whether seniors' care is within our sights, or not quite in focus yet.

Through BC Care Providers Association's (BCCPA) 2020 provincial Budget Submission entitled ***A 2020 Vision for Seniors' Care***, BCCPA shares our recommendations for the future of seniors' care. When it comes to this important area, we simply cannot afford to be short-sighted.

Sincerely,



Daniel Fontaine, Chief Executive Officer

## Overview

Through BC Care Providers Association's (BCCPA) 2020 provincial Budget Submission entitled **A 2020 Vision for Seniors' Care**, BCCPA shares four recommendations for strengthening seniors care.

1. As outlined in BCCPA's report, **Bedlam in BC's Continuing Care Sector**, BCCPA recommends that the B.C. government develop a strategy to increase the number of long-term care bed equivalents by at least 30,000 over the next twenty years.<sup>1</sup>



Specifically, BCCPA recommends that:

- Approximately **\$1.6 billion** over three years be allocated to build 5,000 new long-term care beds, along with sufficient funds to cover operating costs, and;<sup>2</sup>
- A total of **\$320 million** be assigned over three years, as to build 1,000 new assisted living suites in B.C., along with the appropriate funds to cover ongoing operating costs.<sup>3</sup>

Further, BCCPA recommends that the government undertake an assessment of all care homes as to determine the Facilities Condition Index<sup>4</sup> in B.C., and that the information be used to develop a 10-year plan to renovate and replace care homes which are nearing the end of their functionality. Special attention should be paid to ensuring that funds allocated to allow for more dementia-friendly designs in care homes.



2. Continue the Seniors Safety and Quality Improvement Program through a **\$20 million-dollar grant over three-years**, managed by the BC Care Providers Association. Expand the program to include the assisted living sector.

3. BCCPA is asking the government to take immediate action on the health human resource crisis, by:

- Improving young people's access to health care education, by allocating **\$30 million over three years** to expand dual credit programs for health care assistants and licensed practical nurses.
- Creating 450 new training spaces for health care assistants outside of the lower mainland. It is estimated that this will cost **\$4 million dollars per year**.
- Allocating an additional **\$500,000 per year** to eliminate NCAS fees and provide travel bursaries for qualified health care assistants.<sup>5</sup>
- Investing one-time funds of **\$1 million** to establish satellite NCAS testing centers on Vancouver Island and in the Interior.



<sup>1</sup> BCCPA. Bedlam in B.C.'s Continuing Care Sector. 2019. Accessed at: [https://bccare.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Bedlam\\_in\\_BC\\_Continuing\\_Care\\_Sector.pdf](https://bccare.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Bedlam_in_BC_Continuing_Care_Sector.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Estimated on costs outlined in: Gibbard, Robyn. *Sizing Up the Challenge: Meeting the Demand for Long-Term Care in Canada*. Ottawa: The Conference Board of Canada, 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Estimated on costs outlined in: CIHI. *Modelling Impact of CCALA Changes*. PowerPoint Presentation. Update to BC HCC Committee. April 2017.

<sup>4</sup> As defined by B.C. Housing, the Facility Condition Index (FCI) is "an industry standard asset management tool which measures the "constructed asset's condition at a specific point in time" (US Federal Real Property Council, 2008). It is a functional indicator resulting from an analysis of different but related operational indicators (such as building repair needs) to obtain an overview of a building's condition as a numerical value."

<sup>5</sup> The Care Aide Registry estimates that the true cost for the NCAS service is \$2200. 238 HCA assessments have been performed since the service began in 2017.

4. As part of the implementation of a province-wide Seniors Quality of Life Framework, BCCPA recommends that the B.C. government allocate annual funding of **\$25 million per year** to establish a new Seniors Quality of Life Fund (SQLF) to support seniors' quality of life through targeted initiatives including:



- **\$22 million per year** for:
  - Increased access to recreational, occupational and physiotherapy;
  - Increased efforts to reduce social isolation, through Adult Day Programs and similar initiatives;
  - Maintaining and enhancing the overall quality of food and nutrition in long-term care homes, including meeting therapeutic diet requirements and providing culturally appropriate meal options, and;
  - Reporting by the Ministry of Health on what initiatives are being undertaken through the SQLF and how they are improving the overall quality of life for seniors in B.C.
- A **\$3 million per year** grant, which would be managed by BCCPA. These designated funds would be allocated towards specialized province-wide programs such as the Concerts in Care and a new pilot program, *Collaborating Artists in Residence*.

## The vision: Improved access to care, through 5,000 new long-term care beds, and 1,000 assisted living suites.

In Canada, almost 30% of people 85 and older live in long-term care homes.<sup>6</sup>

As more British Columbians than ever before become seniors, our province will require substantially more long-term care beds.

According to a 2017 Conference Board of Canada report, **Canada will need to nearly double its long-term care capacity, by building an additional 199,000 long-term care beds by 2035.**<sup>7</sup>

B.C. will need 30,000+ long-term care beds by 2035:

**5,000** by 2020

**6,400** by 2025

**8,200** by 2030

**11,000** by 2035

The cost will be close to **\$30 billion.**

The demand for long-term care in B.C. is already growing, evidenced by increasing wait times for long-term care.<sup>8</sup> In fact, according to the Conference Board of Canada, **the actual current bed demand in B.C. (as of 2016) is 33,300. This is significantly higher than the current number of beds in B.C., which is closer to 30,000.**

Further, **B.C. will require approximately 64,200 long-term beds by 2035, which represents an increase of 30,900 based on current demand levels.** The total estimated cost of constructing and operating these new beds is close to **\$30 billion.**<sup>9</sup>

Some of the demand for long-term care might be offset by developing or expanding home health care or assisted living services to better support seniors to age in place. As such, BCCPA also recommends that the Ministry of Health build an additional 1,000 publicly subsidized assisted living suites.<sup>10</sup>

As part of any strategy, new services should include an appropriate mix of government and private (for profit and non-profit) operators.

While the addition of new long-term care beds is part of the solution, the infrastructure which already exists will also need to be replaced over time. **Specifically, as care homes generally do not have the physical infrastructure required to meet the care needs of residents who are more complex now than when the care homes were originally built.**<sup>11</sup>

<sup>6</sup> A Policy Framework to Guide a National Seniors Strategy for Canada. CMA. August 2015. Accessed at: [https://www.cma.ca/Assets/assets-library/document/en/about-us/gc2015/policy-framework-to-guide-seniors\\_en.pdf](https://www.cma.ca/Assets/assets-library/document/en/about-us/gc2015/policy-framework-to-guide-seniors_en.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Gibbard, Robyn. Sizing Up the Challenge: Meeting the Demand for Long-Term Care in Canada. Ottawa: The Conference Board of Canada, 2017.

<sup>8</sup> Office of the Seniors Advocate. Monitoring Seniors Services 2016. Accessed at: <https://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/osa-reports/report-monitoring-seniors-services-2016/>

<sup>9</sup> As outlined in the Conference Board of Canada report it estimates the capital cost of each new long-term care bed at \$320,000 (2017 dollars) and operating cost of each new long-term care bed at approximately \$75,000 per year. According to an internal 2016 BCCPA study it estimated the construction costs at \$175,000 to \$220,000 per bed. These figures, however, exclude land, which has also risen significantly in cost, in keeping with rapidly escalating real estate prices in many parts of the province.

<sup>10</sup> According to the report *Monitoring Seniors' Services* (2017), issued by the Office of the Seniors Advocate, there were 4,485 publicly subsidized and 3,582 private registered assisted living units in B.C., as of March 2017.

<sup>11</sup> David Walker. *Caring for our aging population and addressing alternate level of care*. Report Submitted to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. June 30, 2011. Toronto.



According to an analysis undertaken by BCCPA it is estimated that there are approximately 117 non-health authority operated care homes that need to be renovated.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, it is estimated that there are approximately 20 non-Health Authority operated care homes that need to be rebuilt.<sup>13</sup>

## Recommendation:

As outlined in BCCPA's report, *Bedlam in BC's Continuing Care Sector*, BCCPA recommends that the B.C. government develop a strategy to increase the number of long-term care bed equivalents<sup>14</sup> by at least 30,000 over the next twenty years.<sup>15</sup>

Specifically, BCCPA recommends that:

- Approximately **\$1.6 billion** over three years be allocated to build 5,000 new long-term care beds, along with sufficient funds to cover operating costs, and;<sup>16</sup>
- A total of **\$320 million** be assigned over three years, as to build 1,000 new assisted living suites in B.C., along with the appropriate funds to cover ongoing operating costs.<sup>17</sup>



Further, BCCPA recommends that the government undertake an assessment of all care homes as to determine the Facilities Condition Index<sup>18</sup> in B.C., and that the information be used to develop a 10-year plan to renovate and replace care homes which are nearing the end of their functionality. Special attention should be paid to ensuring that funds allocated to allow for more dementia-friendly designs in care homes.



Supportive environments can promote way finding and orientation, improve activities of daily living function, autonomy and meaningful activity, reduce anxiety, agitation, aggression and falls as well as provide better person-centred care for people living with dementia.

<sup>12</sup> This figure was derived by taking percentage of non-HA care homes (36 out of 57) that have an available Facility Condition Index (FCI) rating listed poor (0.11 to 0.3 or 11 to 30%) multiplied by the number of publicly funded non-HA care homes (186).

<sup>13</sup> This is derived by taking percentage of non-HA care homes (6 out of 57) that have an available Facility Condition Index (FCI) rating listed as critical (0.3 or 30% and higher) multiplied by the number of publicly funded non-HA care homes (186).

<sup>14</sup> As discussed in BCCPA's *Bedlam in B.C.'s Continuing Care Sector* report, a long-term care bed equivalent refers to actual long-term care spaces and/or appropriate home support, or assisted living.

<sup>15</sup> BCCPA. *Bedlam in B.C.'s Continuing Care Sector*. 2019. Accessed at: [https://bccare.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Bedlam\\_in\\_BC\\_Continuing\\_Care\\_Sector.pdf](https://bccare.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Bedlam_in_BC_Continuing_Care_Sector.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Estimated on costs outlined in: *Gibbard, Robyn. Sizing Up the Challenge: Meeting the Demand for Long-Term Care in Canada. Ottawa: The Conference Board of Canada, 2017.*

<sup>17</sup> Estimated on costs outlined in: *Gibbard, Robyn. Sizing Up the Challenge: Meeting the Demand for Long-Term Care in Canada. Ottawa: The Conference Board of Canada, 2017.*

<sup>18</sup> As defined by B.C. Housing, the Facility Condition Index (FCI) is "an industry standard asset management tool which measures the "constructed asset's condition at a specific point in time" (US Federal Real Property Council, 2008). It is a functional indicator resulting from an analysis of different but related operational indicators (such as building repair needs) to obtain an overview of a building's condition as a numerical value."

## The vision: The continuation of the Seniors Safety & Quality Improvement Program

The Seniors Safety and Quality Improvement Program was established in 2017 to provide contracted care home operators with access to funding which could be used to purchase any new equipment, intended to improve safety and quality of life for care home residents.<sup>19</sup>

BCCPA was designated by the Ministry of Health to manage this \$10 million-dollar grant over three years.

Through the program, applicants have been able to purchase beds, lifts and bathing equipment, which would not have been covered under their funding agreements with the health authorities.

The program has been an effective way to improve the safety and quality of life for many seniors living in B.C.'s long-term care homes. However, resources are scheduled to run-out at the end of this fiscal year.

Along with recommending that this program be continued, BCCPA is asking that this program be expanded to include assisted living providers, as providers are finding that their equipment is not suitable for an increasingly complex client base, and expect the challenge to increase significantly once Bill 16 (2016)<sup>20</sup> is implemented.

### Recommendation:

Continue the Seniors Safety and Quality Improvement Program through a **\$20 million-dollar grant, over three-years**, managed by the BC Care Providers Association. Expand the program to include the assisted living sector.

The original program included the establishment of an advisory committee, which oversaw the administration of funds.

The Committee is comprised of the B.C. Ministry of Health, the Denominational Health Association, SafeCare BC and the BC Care Providers.



<sup>19</sup> All non-government publicly funded long-term care homes operating within the province are eligible to participate by applying for funds which can be used for equipment purchases to support the effective and safe delivery of high-quality seniors' care in the province.

<sup>20</sup> Historically, CCALA has permitted assisted living residents to be supported by no more than two prescribed personal services. Under the legislative changes brought forward by Bill 16 (2016) the limit of two services will be removed, enabling more people to qualify for assisted living.

## The vision: Ensuring that there are enough workers to care for B.C. seniors, through strategic investments and innovative solutions that address the demands of B.C.'s labour market.

While the B.C. Ministry of Health has recently made significant investments to increase care levels in long-term care, quality care for seniors is not possible without dedicated and qualified care staff. Immediate government action is required to develop and implement a comprehensive health human resource strategy to address chronic and acute workforce shortages.

B.C. will need an additional 1,511 FTEs to meet the Health Authority average of 3.36 hours per resident day, including:

**900** HCAs

**300** LPNs

**165** RNs

**50** Allied Professionals

**100** Un-regulated Allied Workers

*Dix, Adrian. "Care Aides" Edited Hansard. British Columbia, Debates of the Legislative Assembly. 41st Parl., 3rd Sess. Thursday May 10, 2018, Afternoon Sitting at 1550.*

### Despite growing demand for seniors' care services, B.C. is experiencing a chronic shortage of qualified care workers.

With an aging population, the seniors' care sector is expected to be one of the fastest growing industries in the province over the next ten years.<sup>21</sup> In order to meet this growing demand, the B.C. Ministry of Health estimates that the sector will require an additional 2,800 full-time equivalent (FTE) HCAs positions over the next five years.<sup>22</sup>

Yet despite strong anticipated demand, the seniors' care sector is currently experiencing chronic shortages of qualified care workers. When surveyed, 95% of seniors' care providers report that they experience staffing shortages.<sup>23</sup>

Workforce shortages are most acute in regions outside of Metro Vancouver. A recent survey of non-government care providers revealed that an estimated **252 FTE HCA** positions are vacant in B.C.'s interior.<sup>24</sup>

The factors contributing to B.C.'s health human resource crisis are multi-faceted, and as outlined in BCCPA's report, *Situation Critical*,<sup>25</sup> no single strategy will be sufficient to address the

challenges – rather a long-term comprehensive strategy is needed.

In the short-term, BCCPA is asking the government to take immediate action on the health human resource crisis, by addressing the following challenges:

<sup>21</sup> WorkBC (2018). *British Columbia's Labour Market Outlook: 2018 Edition*. Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training. <https://www.workbc.ca/Labour-Market-Industry/Labour-Market-Outlook.aspx>

<sup>22</sup> Dix, Adrian. "Care Aides" Edited Hansard. British Columbia, Debates of the Legislative Assembly. 41st Parl., 3rd Sess. Thursday May 10, 2018, Afternoon Sitting at 1550.

<sup>23</sup> SafeCare BC 2018. Highlights from the 2018 Member Survey. Vancouver, September 7, 2018. <https://www.safecarebc.ca/2018/09/07/we-asked-you-told-us/>

<sup>24</sup> BCCPA 2019. B.C. Interior's long-term care homes declare 'health human resource emergency' due to staff shortages. Vancouver, May 13, 2019. <https://bccpa.ca/2019/05/b-c-interiors-long-term-care-homes-declare-health-human-resources-emergency-due-to-staff-shortages/>

<sup>25</sup> BCCPA 2018. *Situation Critical—A Made-In-BC Plan to Address the Seniors' care Labour Shortage*. June 2018. <http://bccpa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Situation-Critical-June-2018.pdf>



- Health care and social assistance jobs are the number one sector for job openings over the next ten years. However, young people are often unaware of career opportunities in seniors care. Dual-credit programs which enable high school students to work toward a vocational degree have historically been limited to male-dominated sectors, such as automotive or welding.
- There are few training spaces available for potential health care assistants who live outside of major urban areas. Online learning is underutilized.
- At \$800, the Nursing Community Assessment Service (NCAS) is costly for many workers seeking employment as a health care assistant in B.C. In addition, applicants are only able to take the assessment at Langara College in Vancouver, and any resulting travel and accommodation fees are incurred at the responsibility of the worker.

## Recommendation:

BCCPA is asking the government to take immediate action on the health human resource crisis, by:

- Improving young people's access to health care education, by allocating **\$30 million over three years** to expand dual credit programs for health care assistants and licensed practical nurses.
- Creating 450 new training spaces for health care assistants outside of the lower mainland. It is estimated that this will cost **\$4 million dollars per year**.
- Allocating an additional **\$500,000 per year** to eliminate NCAS fees and provide travel bursaries for qualified health care assistants.<sup>26</sup>
- Investing one-time funds of **\$1 million** to establish satellite NCAS testing centers on Vancouver Island and in the Interior.



<sup>26</sup> The Care Aide Registry estimates that the true cost for the NCAS service is \$2200. 238 HCA assessments have been performed since the service began in 2017.

## The vision: Seniors' care that isn't just about health care, through support for deinstitutionalized care models that help seniors have the best day possible.

Seniors care is often viewed through a clinical lens.

In many seniors' care environments, performance indicators focus on "functioning." Clinical outcomes are constantly tracked and monitored. Front-line staff are expected to focus on tasks, rather than outcomes. Risk mitigation and demonstrating accountability for funds becomes the service provider's objective.

However, none of these things truly provide quality of life.

As outlined in BCCPA's 2017 paper *Strengthening Seniors Care: A Made-in-BC Roadmap*,<sup>27</sup> quality of life refers to activities that take place beyond basic shelter, food, and medical needs. These activities enrich lives and have been proven to improve mental and physical health, as well as help seniors live longer.<sup>28</sup> To meet quality of life goals and address gaps in quality of life programming, **BCCPA has recommended that new funding be allocated for the creation of a Seniors Quality of Life Fund (SQLF).**

Since *Strengthening Seniors Care*, BCCPA has developed and submitted a formal proposal to the B.C. government asking for the establishment of a \$25 million fund, which includes the \$22 million outlined in *Strengthening Seniors Care* and a \$3 million component geared towards specialized province-wide programs. These programs, such as the *Concerts in Care* and a new pilot program, *Collaborating Artists in Residence (CAiR)* would improve the health and well-being of seniors in B.C. and could be managed by BCCPA.

BCCPA has been advocating for the implementation of Continuing Care Hubs.

This new model of care marries the practical design and delivery of continuing care with community based non-medical services.

BCCPA believes Care Hubs can help seniors age in place for longer, while improving quality of life for seniors.



SQLF would provide up to \$100 per month per non-government long-term care bed.

While this fund would be primarily available to long-term care operators, care providers applying for funding would be required to demonstrate how seniors living at home would also benefit. This includes provisions such as transportation plans to help seniors attend programs or receive care including Adult Day Programs.

<sup>27</sup> BCCPA. *Strengthening Seniors Care: A Made-In-BC Roadmap*. January 2017. Accessed at: [http://bccpa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/BCCPA\\_Roadmap\\_Full\\_Jan2017.pdf](http://bccpa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/BCCPA_Roadmap_Full_Jan2017.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> Measured Outcome. *Wellness & Quality-of-life Programs for Low-income Seniors*. Rebecca Thomas. 2017. Accessed at: [http://measuredoutcome.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/MO\\_Seniors-Wellness-Programs\\_Updated-Version\\_WEB.pdf](http://measuredoutcome.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/MO_Seniors-Wellness-Programs_Updated-Version_WEB.pdf)

To support this work, BCCPA's Quality Committee developed a Seniors Quality of Life Framework entitled 'The Best Day Possible'.<sup>29</sup>

This framework identifies key enablers to providing person-centred care and improving quality of life.

The purpose of the Quality of Life Framework for B.C. seniors in care is to provide a common understanding, consistent language and practical interventions to improve and support the quality of life for older people in all care settings. The framework is comprised of guiding principles, values, domains and dimensions and actions.

## Recommendation:

As part of the implementation of a province-wide Seniors Quality of Life Framework, BCCPA recommends that the B.C. government allocate annual funding of **\$25 million per year** to establish a new Seniors Quality of Life Fund (SQLF) to support seniors' quality of life through targeted initiatives including:

- **\$22 million per year** for:
  - Increased access to recreational, occupational and physiotherapy;
  - Increased efforts to reduce social isolation, through Adult Day Programs and similar initiatives;
  - Maintaining and enhancing the overall quality of food and nutrition in long-term care homes, including meeting therapeutic diet requirements and providing culturally appropriate meal options, and;
  - Reporting by the Ministry of Health on what initiatives are being undertaken through the SQLF and how they are improving the overall quality of life for seniors in B.C.
- A **\$3 million per year** grant, which would be managed by BCCPA. These designated funds would be allocated towards specialized province-wide programs such as the Concerts in Care and a new pilot program, *Collaborating Artists in Residence*.



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<sup>29</sup> BCCPA. The Best Day Possible: A quality of life framework for seniors' care in BC. 2019. Accessed at: <https://bccare.ca/gol-framework>

## About BCCPA

BC Care Providers Association (BCCPA) has represented non-government care providers for over 40 years. We work with over 350 long-term care, home care, assisted living, independent living and commercial members across the province. Our members provide care for over 25,000 seniors annually and creates more than 18,000 direct and indirect jobs across the province.

## About B.C.'s Continuing Care Sector

B.C.'s Home and Community Care budget exceeds \$2.5 billion, which is on par with the fifth largest Ministry. Over two-thirds of all seniors' care in the province is delivered by non-government providers – which includes both for-profit and non-profit providers. Many non-government providers are funded directly by the regional health authorities to deliver seniors' care services across the province.







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