



Reimagining Home Health for Seniors in BC: Priority Actions for Change

Home health encompasses services provided in an individual's home, promoting independence and improved quality of life for seniors. Family-funded home health providers play a critical role in caring for older adults and addressing the growing need for quality senior care. Self-funded services are personalized and flexible, reduce strain on the public healthcare system and reflect the preferences of seniors to age in place.

DID YOU KNOW?

96% of Canadians want to age at home and live independently for as long as possible.

Provide Sustainable Funding to Ensure Quality Care



Regional health authorities and crown corporations—such as WorkSafe BC and ICBC—partner with family-funded home health providers to deliver services to clients in their homes. However, the service rates under these contracts are currently too low, barely covering the costs of providing high-quality care. This lack of sustainable funding makes it challenging for family-funded providers to maintain their staffing pools and fulfill the obligations of their contracts.

With an aging population and increasing demand for care, the provincial government must recognize home health as a vital component of the healthcare system. Sustainable funding with fully loaded rates will be necessary to meet the growing needs.

ACTION REQUIRED: Provide a comprehensive rate that accurately reflects the actual cost of delivering high-quality home health services. A comprehensive rate must cover operational expenses, inflation, and provide for fair and competitive wages. This approach will assist providers in sustaining their business while meeting client needs.

Restore Access to Affordable Live-In Home Support



Live-in-home support provides seniors with continuous, around-the-clock care, allowing older adults to live comfortably and safely in their homes. For middle-income seniors who do not qualify for publicly subsidized care, live-in home support at a daily flat rate offers affordable support at home, while also alleviating pressure on the broader healthcare system.

The current system creates barriers to families seeking live-in home support. In 2016, the BC Employment Standards tribunal confirmed that live-in home support workers employed by family funded providers must be paid hourly, with overtime applied after 8 hours. In contrast, employees of government-funded programs can be paid at an affordable flat daily rate. This ruling made live-in home support unsustainable for family-funded providers and unaffordable for seniors.

ACTION REQUIRED: Restore access to affordable live-in home support by amending the alternative minimum wage standard for live-in home support workers to encompass employees of family-funded home health providers. This change would help ensure that live-in home support remains affordable for older adults (regardless of their provider), alleviate the financial burden on families, and allow providers to deliver high-quality home support to their clients sustainably.

Enhance Public Protection and Client Safety



The BC Care Aide and Community Health Worker Registry maintains a database of credentialed or 'registered' health care assistants (HCAs) working for publicly funded healthcare employers. It verifies that workers meet minimum educational qualifications and has the power to suspend or remove HCAs from the database who are accused of abuse or neglect. However, family-funded providers have limited or no access to this list of registered HCAs.

To ensure consistent care quality, family-funded home health providers should have equal access to the BC Care Aide and Community Health Worker Registry. A notification system should also be implemented to alert employers if an HCA is suspended or removed, to prevent unsafe hiring.

ACTION REQUIRED: Consolidate the Registry under the BC College of Nurses and Midwives (BCCNM) and allow family-funded providers and the public access to it. This would improve oversight, maintain high standards across all providers, and increase transparency, thus building public confidence.

Cut Red Tape with Intermunicipal Business Licenses



Family-funded providers currently face the costly and time-consuming task of obtaining separate business licenses for each municipality in which they operate. Implementing intermunicipal business licenses (IMBLs) for home health providers would simplify this process, lower administrative costs, and enhance service accessibility across multiple regions.

ACTION REQUIRED: BC Government should implement an Intermunicipal Business License (IMBL) system similar to trades and construction companies to streamline the licensing process for home health providers operating across municipalities. It would reduce administrative burdens, lower costs, encourage more providers to enter the market, and help providers service clients across BC more efficiently.

Introduce Support for Aging in the Right Place



As BC's aging population continues to grow, home health services are essential to meet the rising demand of seniors who wish to remain in their own homes, aging with dignity and independence. Family-funded home health services help reduce pressure on the broader healthcare system, ensuring that hospital and long-term care spaces remain available for those who need them most.

ACTION REQUIRED: Implement a refundable Aging-in-the-Right Place tax credit, modelled after Quebec's successful program, to help cover the costs of eligible home health services, making aging at home more accessible and affordable for seniors.

About BCCPA

BC Care Providers Association has represented non-government care providers for over 40 years. We work with over 500 long-term care, home health care, assisted living, independent living, and commercial members across the province. As part of our mandate, BCCPA champions B.C.'s family-funded seniors living and continuing care options as a way for older adults to live well.