

Policy Motions adopted in 2022:

- **New Long-Term Care Funding Model**

Whereas, to meet the needs of Canada's aging population, B.C.'s long-term care sector will require a fair and sustainable funding model to ensure that the best possible care is available for older adults living in care; and

Whereas the per diem rate in B.C. is intended to fund the costs of direct care, facility operations or support care, and any approved capital contributions; and

Whereas, the Office of the Seniors Advocate reports daily funding (i.e. per diems) ranging from \$206 to \$309 and varied daily rates demonstrate a lack of transparency and standardization; and

Whereas, each health authority allocates long-term care funding to operators based on their own methodologies, resulting in inconsistencies between health authority regions; for instance, the average per diem ranges from \$225 in the Interior Health Authority (IHA) to \$252 in the Island Health Authority (VIHA); and

Whereas, operators are not provided with a detailed breakdown of their overall long-term care funding per diem rate, resulting in disparities and unstandardized financing across B.C.; and

Whereas, the inflationary lift of 3% received by care providers for the year 2021/2022 is below the Consumer Price Index, demonstrating insufficient funding to provide the best care possible for seniors; and

Whereas, care providers are currently funded to meet an average of 3.36 hours per resident day, and any necessary staffing increase to meet this standard, or any future standard, must be fully funded; and

Whereas, the financing of wage levelling, collective agreement terms and conditions need to be sufficient to ensure appropriate compensation for health care workers; and

Whereas, housing for many Canadian seniors living in long-term care is currently outdated or nearing the end of its functional life; and

Whereas, as buildings age, more capital funding is necessary to maintain the infrastructure of the building, yet capital funding is a fixed cost in the current funding model, which does not assess the funding required to maintain long-term care buildings.

Therefore, BCCPA Recommends:

That the Government of British Columbia to work collaboratively with the seniors' care sector to develop and implement a new funding model for B.C.'s long-term care sector based on the principles of timeliness, sustainability, equity and transparency; where the funding methodology reflects: the true cost of compensating workers; the cost of construction, debt servicing and building operations; and account for inflation.

- Quality of Life Programming for Older Adults

Whereas, by 2036, one out of four Canadians will be over 65; and

Whereas, British Columbia's seniors' population is increasingly culturally diverse, representing a rich mosaic of nationalities, languages, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, religions and spiritualities; and

Whereas, the new national standard for long-term care developed by the Health Standards Organization (HSO) directs care providers to enhance the quality-of-life programming provided to long-term care residents, and identifies meaningful activities, nutritious and enjoyable meals, culturally appropriate services, and access to family and friends as key components for overall well-being; and

Whereas, the quality of life framework developed by BCCPA's Quality Committee identified four tenets for supporting older adults to live their best day possible each day: (i) supportive environments; (ii) meaningful relationships; (iii) fulfilling activities; and (iv) respecting diversity; and

Whereas, long-term care and assisted living residents require unique recreational and cultural programming due to the complexity and diversity of their physical and cognitive needs; and

Whereas, the Office of the Seniors Advocate has documented the need for older adults living in care to have increased access to life-enhancing programming, including recreation, physical and occupational therapies.

Therefore, BCCPA recommends:

That the Government of British Columbia fund care providers in the long-term care and assisted living sector to enhance access to quality of life programming so as to improve the emotional, social, physical, psychological and spiritual well-being of older adults.

- Renewal of EquipCare BC

Whereas, EquipCare BC is an efficiently run program that allows long-term care and assisted living operators to purchase needed equipment such as lifts, beds and urgent call systems, as well as infection prevention and control systems, to enhance employee and resident health, safety and well-being; and

Whereas the EquipCare BC program has appropriate governance structures in place, including representation from the BC Ministry of Health, BC Care Providers Association, Denominational Health Association and SafeCare BC; and

Whereas, the original government investment of \$10 million for the Seniors Safety Quality Improvement Program (SSQIP) in 2017 permitted operators to purchase over 8,000 items, including essential equipment and life-enhancing systems; and

Whereas, the subsequent government investment of \$10 million over three years in 2020 allowed operators to purchase over 3.5 million items, including infection prevention and control, medical screening and respiratory devices, beds and mattresses, overbed tables, shower chairs and tubs, mobility equipment, lighting and visual aids, sensory rooms, music therapy, and ergonomic furniture; and

Whereas, the renewed \$8 million program has enabled operators to purchase vital infection control as well as safety and quality of life items over the 2022 fiscal year; and

Whereas, British Columbia is increasingly experiencing extreme weather events and natural disasters, in part due to climate change, such as wildfires, floods, and heatwaves, and older adults with complex chronic conditions are particularly vulnerable to such life-threatening events; and

Whereas, care providers will need access to essential equipment and strategies, including air conditioning, HEPA filters and other environmental systems to mitigate the effects of climate change and help protect elderly residents against the impacts of recurring heat waves, declining air quality due to wildfires, and other natural disasters.

Therefore, BCCPA recommends:

That the Association calls upon the Government of British Columbia to renew and expand EquipCare BC with a \$20 million dollar investment over 3 years so as to provide appropriate equipment, infection prevention and control systems, and climate-change mitigation strategies.

- Encouraging Independent Living

Whereas, by 2036, one out of four Canadians will be over 65; and

Whereas, the aging population will result in sweeping economic and systemic challenges for Canadians and a host of other countries across the world, such as disruptions to the labour force, increasing public expenditures; and pressure on the health care system; and

Whereas, independent living is housing designed exclusively for older adults, generally those aged 65 and over, that has proven itself to be safe and supportive, effective in reducing loneliness, and promotes active lifestyles while allowing residents to live independently; and

Whereas, based on historical utilization rates and population growth forecasts, B.C. will require an additional 600 independent living suites in Central Vancouver Island, 800 suites in Greater Victoria, 2,100 suites in the Metro Vancouver area, 300 suites in the Fraser Valley, 400 suites in the Central Interior and 900 suites in the Okanagan by 2027; and

Whereas, many older adults are looking to downsize as their family units become smaller, while at the same time younger people that are looking to raise a family in B.C. struggle to find suitable housing due to housing shortages and a lack of affordability; and

Whereas, multi-family housing has been proffered as one way to meet this challenge; and

Whereas, local government incentives such as density bonuses, expedited permitting, parking or development cost levy relaxation could acknowledge the important role which seniors living providers play in creating housing stock, and by doing so freeing up single-family housing for younger families, or redevelopment.

Therefore, BCCPA recommends:

That EngAge BC calls upon local governments in British Columbia to explore new incentives to increase the development of seniors' congregate living such as independent living

residences, thereby improving the well-being of older adults while providing housing supply and real estate for the next generation of residents.