

*The following is an address given by BC Care Providers Association (BCCPA) CEO Daniel Fontaine on March 7, 2016 at the Ministry of Health's news conference in Victoria announcing changes to the Assisted Living Act.*

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Thank you Minister for inviting me here to speak today.

The BC Care Providers is the oldest and largest association comprising over 300 members representing the entire continuing care sector – this includes both for-profit and non-profit operators.

Our members deliver residential complex care, operate assisted living units and provide home care across the entire province.

As our population continues rapidly to age, it is important we collaborate with the Ministry of Health and the various health authorities to come up with solutions to ensure the right services are available to seniors in the right place and at the right time of their lives.

It's for this reason we released an extensive report last September titled Quality-Innovation-Collaboration – Strengthening Seniors Care Delivery in BC.

It had a number of innovative recommendations on how government and our members could work collaboratively – as partners in the delivery of seniors care – to further improve the quality and choice of services offered to seniors.

We are pleased to see today that the Minister and the Government of British Columbia are acting upon one of our recommendations that will afford seniors the opportunity to reside in an assisted living setting longer - should they so choose.

By opening up the number of prescribed services our members can offer to seniors residing in an assisted living setting, it will help to ensure – if or when the transition to residential care is required - it is done so at a more appropriate time for everyone.

Once fully applied, the proposed amendments to the Act may ensure that seniors in an acute care facility needing care in their community – will be able to do so in a more timely manner.

This would be most welcomed by seniors, their families and care providers - and most importantly, lead to the delivery of better health outcomes.

We value our long-standing partnership with the Minister, the Ministry of Health and the regional Health Authorities. We also acknowledge the important and valuable role the Seniors Advocate can and is playing to strengthen seniors care delivery in BC.

On behalf of the BC Care Providers Association, I want to thank the Minister for following through on one of our recommendations.

I also want to acknowledge Isobel Mackenzie, for her efforts at first raising the need to make these changes and continuing to advocate on behalf of seniors in care or receiving care in BC.

We sincerely look forward to working with Premier Christy Clark and her government on our mutual goal to further strengthen the delivery, access to and quality of seniors care in BC.

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*Check against delivery.*