



# **Frequently Asked Questions**

**About Access to  
Government Subsidized**

# **Residential Care Facilities**

## **1. What kinds of services are provided in residential care facilities?**

Residential care facilities provide supervised environments and access to 24 hour nursing care for people who can no longer safely live at home. Services usually include meal preparation and assistance, professional nursing care and/or supervision and medication management. Staff members also assist clients with activities of daily living, such as bathing and dressing.

## **2. What's the difference between seniors' supportive living units and government subsidized residential care facilities?**

Supportive living units are home-like, safe and secure housing units that offer tenants a variety of services such as prepared meals, housekeeping and social and recreational activities. Home and Community Care staff may come in to provide required services. Such services allow people to retain a measure of independence, and stay living in the community instead of going to a long-term care facility. In Victoria, people can choose between private and publicly funded supportive living units.

Government subsidized residential care facilities provide meals, personal care services and access to nursing care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Residential care facilities are designed to serve people with complex care needs, physical and/or mental conditions who cannot live safely on their own and are in urgent need of care.

## **3. Who can live in government subsidized residential care facilities?**

A person must meet basic citizenship and provincial residency requirements. They must have an assessed and urgent need for 24-hour residential care. Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) case management staff evaluate the following factors to determine someone's eligibility for government subsidized residential care: the person's health status, the family caregiver's ability to provide the necessary care and support in the home and whether the resources currently being used in the community are appropriate, safe and sustainable.

#### **4. How much does it cost?**

Residents pay a daily rate based on their taxable income reported in the previous year (i.e. the 2004 daily rate is based on the income tax filed in 2003). The rate is usually between \$27 and \$67 per day, paid monthly. The case manager will advise the client of the daily rate when the assessment for residential care has been completed.

Residents may also be required to pay other fees for services not covered by the Ministry of Health. These fees could include an additional fee for private or semi-private rooms, continence products, activity fees, medications not covered by Pharmacare, companion services and hairdressing. The facility is responsible for advising residents of these additional fees.

#### **5. Can I choose where I want to live?**

Residential care beds are a scarce and valuable resource. There may not always be a vacancy immediately available in the facility of your choice. In British Columbia there is a first available bed policy, which means that if you are assessed as requiring long term residential care, you are required to accept the first vacancy that is offered to you. If you are assigned to a facility that is not your preference, there is a process in place to transfer you to your preferred facility when a vacancy becomes available. When you are offered a bed at a government subsidized residential care facility, you must be prepared to move in within 48 hours of being notified that a bed has become available.

#### **6. How long will I wait before a bed in a facility is offered to me?**

You will be put on a waitlist for a bed at the first available and appropriate residential care facility. It is extremely difficult to predict how long you will wait to be admitted. It may be within a few days of assignment or it may be up to 4 or more months. If you are waiting for a bed and your life circumstances change dramatically, please notify your case manager.

#### **7. Once offered a bed, how long do I have to accept this?**

You must be prepared to move within 48 hours of being offered placement.

## **8. Who do I speak with if I have concerns about the facility waitlist choice I have been offered?**

If you are dissatisfied with the facility waitlist you have been offered, you may request a review of the wait listing decision. To do so, please contact the Client Relations Office of the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) by calling 370-8323 (south island) 951-9503 (central island) and 830-6955 (north island). The VIHA Residential Care Access Team will then undertake a review of your case. The Client Relations Office will provide you with a written response upon receiving the outcome of this review.

## **9. When should I register my concerns?**

We recommend that you contact the Client Relations Office as soon as you identify a concern with your placement option. Do not wait until you are offered placement within a facility to register your concern, as this timeframe would not provide sufficient opportunity for the Client Relations Office to thoroughly address the circumstances of your case prior to your move.

## **10. If I don't accept the bed that is offered, what will happen?**

If you do not accept the first available bed that is offered, your name will be removed from the first available bed program. You will need to make arrangements for your immediate discharge from hospital. The case manager or the hospital liaison nurse will support you as you consider your options. These options include but are not limited to: using publicly funded support services, using private pay home supports or moving into a private pay residential care facility.

## **11. Can I transfer to another facility later?**

Yes. You can request a transfer to your preferred facility from your assigned facility six weeks after admission into the assigned facility. Transfers take place as space becomes available at the preferred facility. There is a Facility Coordinator assigned to each facility that can help you with this process.

## **12. Can I transfer a family member from a facility on the Mainland to one on Vancouver Island?**

Eligible clients can transfer between government subsidized residential care facilities anywhere in British Columbia. Please contact your Case Manager to initiate this process.

## **13. I don't need residential care yet. Can I go on a waiting list so I'll have a bed when I need it?**

The Vancouver Island Health Authority does not maintain waitlists for its residential care facilities. Instead, access to residential care beds is prioritized according to urgency and need. This ensures that people who urgently require residential care can access care as soon as possible. Access to care prior to need is not possible.

## **14. I don't qualify for residential care. Are there any other services to help me?**

There are a wide variety of private and government subsidized community support services available. These include but are not limited to:

- Home support services
- Meal services
- Bathing services
- Adult day centers
- Respite services
- Supportive housing

Your Case Manager can help you access appropriate community support services.

## **15. Who can I call if I have questions about this process?**

If you are in the hospital, contact the Community Access Coordinator covering your unit.

If you are at home, contact your Case Manager.

If you are in a facility, contact the Facility Coordinator of your facility.

General Enquiries regarding residential care: 388-2273



**Home and Community Care**

# **General Enquiries Line**

**388-2273**

**1-888-533-2273**