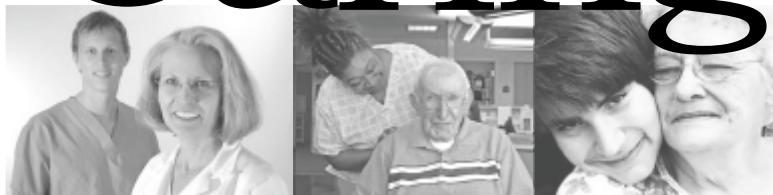


Caring News



ACCA
ALBERTA CONTINUING CARE ASSOCIATION

News and Views of the Alberta Continuing Care Association

A Message From the ACCA Board

In this issue ACCA would like to tell you about the challenges Continuing Care facility operators are facing. The most critical issue at this time is to attract enough staff to fill all the available positions. The province currently needs over 2000 health care aides just to fill the vacant jobs. Current staff are working short or working overtime on a regular basis to ensure good resident care.

The workforce shortage is being addressed by ACCA and partners including Alberta Home Care Association, Alberta Senior Citizens Housing Association, Alberta Health & Wellness, Alberta Advanced Education & Technology, Alberta Employment, Immigration & Industry officials. Together these groups have been implementing a plan to increase recruitment and enhance retention of care staff, as well as increase enrolment numbers and available spaces at post-secondary institutions for educating Health Care Aides (HCA's). An aggressive recruitment campaign was launched in November 2007 to attract current Health Care Aides to the industry and to offer incentives to others to become Health Care Aides.

Addressing the Workforce Shortage: A Health Care Aide Recruitment Initiative

ACCA members employ over 15,000 continuing care employees throughout the province. Eighty percent of these employees are health care aides. The continuing care industry in Alberta is critically short of HCAs. Health care aides provide the majority of the hands-on care that a resident receives. Needless to say it takes a very special, dedicated type of person to be a successful health care aide. Licensed Practical Nurses and Registered Nurses provide the remainder of the direct care.

Some of the reasons continuing care has a shortage of workers:

- There are many jobs available in Alberta competing for the same level of worker as Health Care Aide (HCA)

- Alberta Health & Wellness as part of the new Continuing Care Health Standards requires that HCA's have completed a certified training program. This training is costly and the schools are not able to attract sufficient students due to this.

- There is no grant funding available to assist prospective health care aides to take the course.

- Continuing Care Operators are not funded to deliver the education program themselves.
- The pay for Health Care Aides in Alberta is the lowest in the country and operators do not receive enough funding to offer a competitive salary even though the provincial Auditor General recommended two years ago that the standards of care in long term care facilities must improve.

We need to work together to alleviate this critical issue so that ACCA member facilities can continue to provide the quality of care and services their residents deserve. If the workforce shortage continues, operators may have to close beds.

How Can You Help?

Providing quality care and services to residents is the basic premise of the Alberta Continuing Care Association's mission. The association is working very hard to support it's members in addressing the staffing issue. Write to your newly elected MLA. Let them know that care staff work very hard and that they deserve adequate compensation. Increasing the salary will also help the industry attract new staff. ACCA regularly communicates to government the need for increased health care aide wages and funding for their education.



Who is ACCA?

The Alberta Continuing Care Association (ACCA) is a voluntary non-profit organization representing owners and operators of long term care (LTC) facilities throughout the province of Alberta. The name change, from Alberta Long Term Care Association (ALTCA) to Alberta Continuing Care Association (ACCA) was effective on July 01, 2007. The new name more accurately reflects the Alberta term that is used to describe long term care that is “continuing care”. Those receiving care include disabled adults, frail elderly, adults with chronic diseases and adults with cognitive impairment.

The (ACCA) membership includes 36 service organizations providing daily care to over 10,000 clients. ACCA membership represents a unique alliance of:

- Private sector facilities;
- Voluntary sector facilities; and
- Public sector facilities.

The number one priority for the Association is to increase the quality of life for the people who live in and are cared for in our member’s facilities. We do this by living our mission and working towards our vision.

Our Vision

To advocate and champion the best continuing care system in Canada.

Our Mission

Enhancing quality of life for individuals receiving continuing care by assisting members in networking, advocacy, education and pursuit of best practices.

Our Values

ACCA members ascribe to and engage the following organizational values that form the foundation of our vision and mission:

- Support members in the pursuit of quality of care and service for residents
- Promote professionalism, sensitivity and empathy in all interactions
- Integrity in relationships and accountability in the use of public funds

In order to fulfill our mission and vision and to be successful as an industry, the providers of continuing care need to be aware of market trends and customer needs and preferences. The Association assists its members in this work and also strives to promote the continuing care industry to government and the public.

Who Pays for What

Each month residents receive an invoice for their room and board, or what we call an accommodation fee. In Alberta, the accommodation fee is set by the provincial government. The residents’ accommodation fee covers approximately one third of the total cost of care and support per month in a long term care centre. This means the total cost of living in a continuing care facility is on average is \$175.00/day or \$5250/month.

Your accommodation fee includes a long list of items and services. Each month you pay for the following items related to room and board, or accommodations.

Accommodation Fees pay for:

Room

A room in a long term care facility

Building Maintenance

Upkeep and repairs

Landscaping/snow removal

Maintenance staff

Security services/equipment

Security staff

Food

Food services/three full meals per day, plus snacks and other nourishment

Kitchen equipment, plates, cutlery, furniture, etc.

Staff & Food Services

Housekeeping services

- Housekeeping staff
- External cleaning services
- Facility laundry (towels, bedding, etc.)

Building operations

- Utilities (gas, electricity)
- Water and sewer

General facility costs

- Furniture
- Common area lounges

- Television
- Chapel, meeting rooms

Dining room

Administration

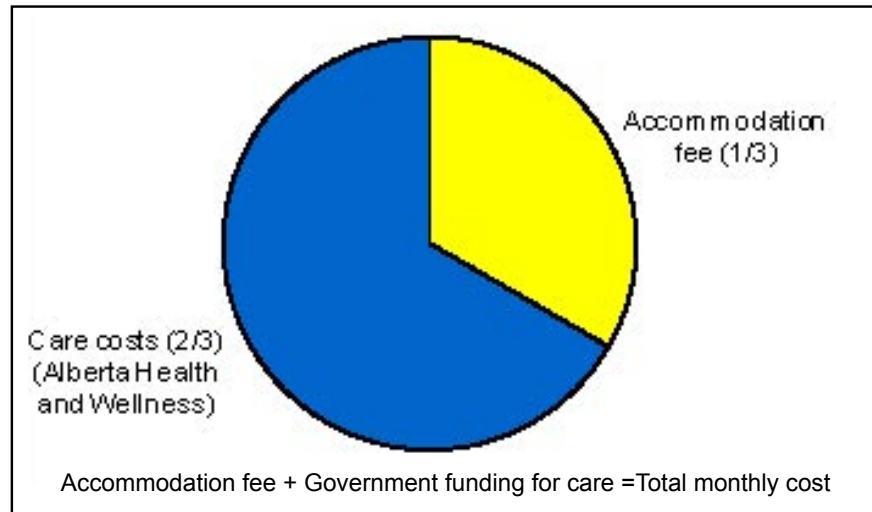
- Facility management
- Office equipment (computers, desks, etc.)
- General office services
- Accounting/billing/purchasing
- Benefits/labour/administration
- Trust account maintenance
- Insurance
- WCB insurance

The Alberta government pays the **care** portion of long term care through the Regional Health Authorities (RHAs). The RHAs receive “global” funding from the provincial government, which they allocate to long term care facilities.

Care funding provides:

Professional staff

- Registered Nurses
- Licensed Practical Nurses
- Dieticians
- Therapists



Social Workers

Medical Advisors

Other staff

- Nursing Aides/ Nurse Attendants/
- Personal Care Aides
- Unit Clerks
- Therapy Aides

Supplies and Medications

- Medical supplies / dressings
- Medications/prescribed drugs
- Incontinence products
- Oxygen and equipment
- Diabetic supplies and testing equipment
- Catheters
- Feeding equipment
- Exercise equipment
- Specialized health equipment
- Specialized bathing tubs and lifts

Personal care services

- Bathing
- Dressing
- Grooming
- Toileting
- Meal assistance

Recreation programs

Transportation

Ambulance service

Special needs

- Special programs may provide for:
- Wheelchairs
- Special beds
- Other medically needed equipment
- Wandergaurd bracelets

Optional services you may pay for:

Some residents may make the choice to pay for extra services not included in the funding provided by the Regional Health Authority. These services may include, but are not limited to:

- Optional care services
- Private duty nursing
- Companion care
- Personal medical supplies
- Hearing aids/ eyeglasses/ dentures
- Personal laundry
- Hair dressing
- Special outings

Additional Funding for Accommodation Fees

The Alberta Seniors Benefit Program provides support in addition to federal benefits received under Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement, Federal Allowance and the GST credit. It is based on income and provides monthly cash benefits to eligible seniors.

To find out if you or your family member is eligible for the Alberta Seniors Benefits Program, visit www.seniors.gov.ab.ca, or call 1-800-642-3853.



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