

A National Seniors Care Strategy

Although most people will rely on seniors care at some point in their lives, Canada's health care system isn't equipped to meet the needs of the aging population. Canada needs a National Seniors Care Strategy to set national standards and ensure that everyone can access the care they need.



What is seniors care?

Seniors care includes home care, long-term care and palliative care. It also includes access to prescription medications, which is known as pharmacare.

The Issue:

With Canada's aging population, more and more people are relying on seniors care. Funding cuts to health care have meant fewer beds available in hospitals and long-term care facilities. Canada will need to nearly double the number of long-term care beds to meet the demand by 2035.



Seniors care often falls outside the scope of the *Canada Health Act*, which only covers medically necessary services provided by doctors and hospitals. A lot of seniors care has been privatized, and not everyone can afford it. The level and scope of seniors care in the public system varies greatly across the country. Provinces and territories all have different wait times and eligibility criteria.



Concerns have been raised about the quality of seniors care. There are high rates of violence and overuse of medication in long-term care facilities. Staffing shortages, inadequate training and poor working conditions for care workers lead to lower-quality care.

The Solution:

Canada needs a National Seniors Care Strategy to address these issues. This Strategy must include:

- Targeted federal funding for home care and long-term care
- National standards that set minimum staffing levels and hours of care to be provided to each resident or patient
- A Human Resources Strategy to guarantee a skilled seniors care workforce

Federal funding should be invested in public long-term care facilities and home care services, since they provide better quality care than private facilities and services.