

## **COSCO Standards for Long-Term Care Facilities**

In the Speech from the Throne the federal government pledged that national standards of care would be developed and that abuse and neglect of vulnerable seniors would be punished. In this document we have listed the factors that would need to be considered when the detailed Act was prepared. For instance, the width of hallways is not something we can define but the government would of course have access to expert knowledge. Our recommendations are as follows:

**Staffing;** qualified personnel; ratio of staff to residents; delineation of resident contact time; improved remuneration for staff; varied professional registered medical staff; on call medical staff, training of staff in a team based approach

**Physical Surroundings;** accessibility; directional signage; communication devices; temperature and lighting; emergency exits; bedroom privacy; bathroom facilities; staff safety provisions Services; food preparation (including preferences); individual nutritional planning; hygiene facilities; medication reviews and supervision; safety measures; recreation; outdoor access; visitor access; protection of money and valuables

**Residents' Council;** provision of a residents' council; inclusion of residents, family and staff; scheduled meetings; promotion of collective and individual interests; access to inspection reports

**Inspections and Supervision;** frequency; unannounced visits; itemized expectations/report preparation, report recipients, enforcement of report orders, penalties for non-compliance; posting of inspection reports

**Funding;** dedicated long term funding,; bilateral agreements; recipient reporting; regularized evaluations by federal authorities

**Technology;** standardized and integrated with current care facilities technological equipment and programs

**Mixed Tenancy;** safety from aggressive behaviour of other residents, particularly if there are significant age differences and/or "housing" of individuals with severe mental health issues and/or substance abuse problems

**COSCO** realizes that many of these provisions are obvious, but it is also evident that many long-term care facilities were not providing acceptable living conditions where dignity and respect were the norm. Nor were the authorities responsible for inspection and enforcement, doing their jobs. The lessons we are continuing to learn from COVID-19 are indeed harsh, but COSCO believes that the duty of the federal government to protect some of the most vulnerable Canadians is in line with human rights obligations and simple human decency.

Respectfully submitted,

National Pensioners' Federation

Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC

COSCO Oct 2020 highlights