Long-term care costs in Nova Scotia 2017

Residential facilities

How government-subsidized nursing homes work

Nursing homes, or Homes for the aged as they are called in Nova Scotia, provide 24-hour professional nursing care and supervision for people who have complex care needs and can no longer be cared for in their own homes.

To gain admission into a nursing home, a client must contact the Department of Health and Wellness. They send a care coordinator and other professionals to meet the client and assess their care needs. The care coordinator's recommendation will be reviewed by specialists for final approval. Once approved, the client can put their name on the waiting list of the nursing homes of their choice. Wait times can differ from several days to several months.

Clients who are able to pay the standard accommodation charge aren’t required to undergo a financial assessment and they retain all of their remaining income and assets. Low-income clients can have an income tax based assessment done and have their rate reduced. The Department of Health and Wellness ensures residents keep at least 15% of one's annual income (minimum retained income). They will not be left with a disposable income lower than $3,396.00/year. Residents have full control over the use and management of their retained income and all assets. Each year, the Department of Health and Wellness sets the standard accommodation charge for nursing homes. These rates are based on average operating costs.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Costs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of care</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Standard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residential care facilities*</td>
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<td>Respite care beds</td>
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* There is a lower level of care offered in nursing homes called “residential care.”

How retirement homes/residences work – no government subsidy

A retirement home is a multi-residence facility that provides accommodation and services such as meals and cleaning for older people. Each individual private retirement home has its own admission procedures, waiting lists and fees. Admission usually depends on the client’s ability to pay and absence of serious medical conditions that require professional nursing care. Generally, private retirement homes have higher fees than government-subsidized nursing homes.

<table>
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<th>Costs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Room type</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Private rooms</td>
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<tr>
<td>One bedroom suites</td>
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Sun Life Financial
Home care

How government-subsidized home care works

Home support services are designed to help clients remain independent and in their own home for as long as possible. Home support provides personal assistance with daily activities, such as bathing, dressing, grooming and light household tasks. The Continuing Care Branch of the Department of Health and Wellness manages home care. A family member, friend or the client requiring care, makes a referral to the Department of Health and Wellness. A care coordinator conducts an assessment involving the care services that an individual is eligible to receive, based on their needs, as well as the ability of the family to provide care. The hours of care granted depend on the assessment.

As a general guideline, the weekly maximum hours allotted for various care are:

- Homemaking – three hours
  (this is a monthly maximum)
- Personal care – four and a half hours
- Meal preparation – two hours

Nursing services and palliative home support services are free of charge.

Private home care – no government subsidy

Since home care resources are limited, many seniors don’t get the care they need from government-subsidized home care services and they have to rely on private home care services.

Costs

**Hourly rate**

$12.45

Approximately 20% of home care users pay a fee for the government-subsidized home care based on the income and household size.

How the adult day care program works

Adult day programs are designed for special needs adults, physically located in the community, to provide a safe group setting during the day when family members are not available to care for them. These centres are usually open daily, Mondays through Fridays (some on Saturdays as well). Adult day programs can be public or private, non-profit or for-profit.

In Nova Scotia, individual facilities manage and operate their own adult day programs.

Costs

**Daily rate**

Includes lunch and snacks $5.00 - $25.00/day

The provincial median is $16.00 per day.