



Nova Scotia Health Continuing Care

**A GUIDE TO MOVING INTO  
LONG-TERM CARE IN NOVA SCOTIA**



Nova Scotia Health Continuing Care

## A GUIDE TO MOVING INTO LONG-TERM CARE IN NOVA SCOTIA

We are Nova Scotia Health Continuing Care. We will guide you through the long-term care application process and help you identify the best path to meet your needs.

Long-term care helps people whose care needs can no longer be met at home. Long-term care provides accommodation, help with personal care, supervisory care and nursing services.

At Nova Scotia Health Continuing Care, we work with a number of licensed long-term care homes in Nova Scotia. By law, these homes must have a government-issued license and meet all government laws, policies and standards. The homes are inspected and monitored to make sure standards are being met.

You can find a list of licensed long-term care homes in Nova Scotia at: <https://novascotia.ca/dhw/ccs/documents/Nursing-Homes-and-Residential-Care-Directories.pdf>.



# A GUIDE TO MOVING INTO LONG-TERM CARE IN NOVA SCOTIA

We understand that it can be stressful and confusing when you or a family member move into long-term care. This guide will help you and your family get ready for the transition.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact your Nova Scotia Health care coordinator or call us (toll-free) at 1-800-225-7225.



## Who will help me throughout the process?

### Care Coordinator

A care coordinator is a licensed health care professional who completes your assessment and coordinates your care, either in the hospital or community.

**My care coordinator is:**

(902) \_\_\_\_\_

### Placement Coordinator

A placement coordinator is a health care professional who coordinates your transition to the long-term care home. Other team members involved in the process may include Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care staff, long-term care home staff and hospital staff.

**My placement coordinator is:**

(902) \_\_\_\_\_

# 1

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## Making decisions about long-term care



If you already receive Continuing Care services through Nova Scotia Health (such as home support or nursing), you can contact your care coordinator directly.

### How do I know if I need long-term care?

You, your family or your health care provider may feel that you need long-term care. You, or anyone you give permission to, can call us at 1-800-225-7225 to request an assessment of your care needs.

A care coordinator will meet with you and anyone else you want to involve, to complete an assessment of your care needs. They will also help you identify other resources that may be available to help you stay at home (or return home from the hospital) before you consider moving to a long-term care home.

### What does the assessment include?

The care coordinator will meet with you and your family to ask questions about your health needs, physical care needs, safety concerns and current supports or help you have now.

The assessment can only be done when you are considered medically stable (e.g. physical or mental illness is resolved or well managed). If you are in the hospital, your attending doctor will let the care coordinator know when you are medically stable.

After your assessment, if the care coordinator determines that you need long-term care, they will make a recommendation to a committee of Nova Scotia Health Continuing Care managers for approval.

If approved, your name will be added to the wait list. If not approved, your care coordinator will discuss other options with you.



## Can I choose the long-term care home I would like to live in?

Your care coordinator can give you a list of homes that can provide the level of care you need. You can view a complete list of homes licensed and funded by the Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care at: <https://novascotia.ca/dhw/ccs/documents/Nursing-Homes-and-Residential-Care-Directories.pdf>.

If they have one, visit the home's website to learn more about them.

Your care coordinator will ask you to choose the community you would like to live in (your preferred community). They will also ask which long-term care homes in your preferred community you would like to live in (your preferred homes).

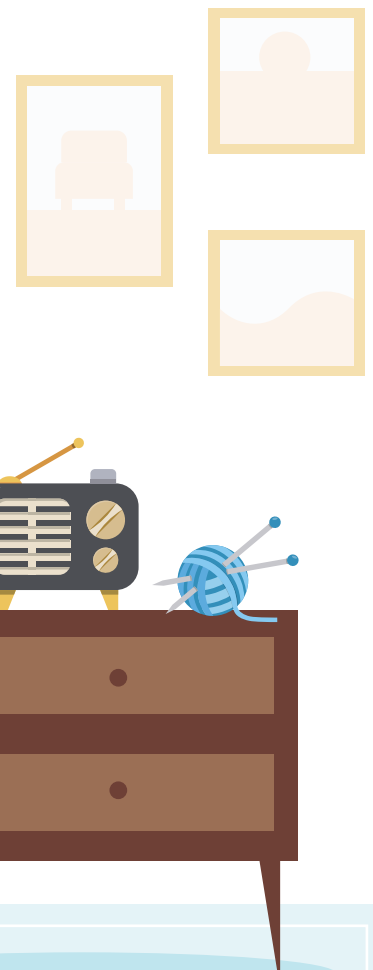
We recommend that you contact the long-term care homes you may be interested in. You and your caregiver(s) can visit these homes to find out more about what they offer and what you can expect if you move there.

During your visit, you may wish to ask about:

- bringing your own furniture
- what items you cannot bring
- how often your family can visit
- if the home has a smoking room
- if you should bring your mobility aids (such as a walker, etc.)
- what fees you will have to pay when you move in
- other information about the home, including its policies and regulations

You may wish to ask for copies of:

- the menu
- calendar of events
- the lease/tenancy agreement outlining the conditions, rights and responsibilities of both you and the home



Additional resources for moving into long-term care:

Caregivers Nova Scotia ..... [caregiversns.org](http://caregiversns.org)

Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia ..... [alzheimer.ca/en/ns](http://alzheimer.ca/en/ns)

Nova Scotia Health ..... [nshealth.ca/content/long-term-care](http://nshealth.ca/content/long-term-care)

Nova Scotia Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care ... [novascotia.ca/dhw/ccs/long-term-care.asp](http://novascotia.ca/dhw/ccs/long-term-care.asp)



### Alternate Level of Care (ALC)?

While in the hospital, you will be asked to pay a daily fee as you wait to move to long-term care.

This is called an Alternate Level of Care (ALC) fee.

It is determined in a way that is similar to the accommodation charge you will pay when you move into a long-term care home.

You will pay the ALC fee directly to the hospital.

Someone working at the hospital will meet with you to talk about your ALC fees and when you will have to start paying them.

## How long will I have to wait to move to a long-term care home?

There is currently a wait list for long-term care.

Your name will be added to the wait list based on the date your level of care has been approved. How long you wait depends on which homes you have selected, how many homes you have selected and how many people are waiting to move into these homes. Information on long-term care wait times is available on the Nova Scotia Government's website at: <https://waittimes.novascotia.ca/procedures/long-term-care>

If you are waiting for long-term care at home and your care needs change while you are waiting, please contact your care coordinator. They will talk with you about increased supports at home which may be available.

They may also suggest adding more homes to your preferred homes list to lower your wait time. You can always move to your preferred home at a later time.

## What happens if I need to stay in the hospital while I wait?

If you need to stay in the hospital while you wait, you must accept the first bed available that meets your care needs. This bed will be within 100 km of your preferred community and it may not be in your preferred home. This helps to make sure you get the care you need as soon as possible. If you accept a bed that is not in your preferred home, your name will stay on a transfer list for your preferred homes.



We make every effort to help you move to the home you prefer to live in.

# 2



## Paying for long-term care

### How much will long-term care cost?

In Nova Scotia, the cost of receiving care and living in a long-term care home is shared between you and the Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care.

You must complete the financial application process before you can move into a long-term care home. The financial application is used to determine the fee, or accommodation charge, for the long-term care home. Your care coordinator will help with this process.

On the application, you can choose whether you agree to pay the standard accommodation charge or if you would like to ask for a reduced fee.

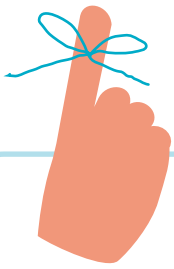
The long-term care rates schedule is updated every year and is available at: [https://novascotia.ca/dhw/ccs/FactSheets/Long\\_Term\\_Care\\_Rate\\_Schedule.pdf](https://novascotia.ca/dhw/ccs/FactSheets/Long_Term_Care_Rate_Schedule.pdf)

The financial review does not include any assets you may have (like a house, car, etc.). You will not be expected to sell your assets to pay for accommodation charges.

If your spouse/partner stays in the community when you enter a long-term care home, they can keep 60% of your joint family income and control over all assets.



Form area with two checkboxes and horizontal dashed lines for notes. A question mark icon is located at the bottom left of the form area.



## REMEMBER

To keep the reduced accommodation charge, you (and your spouse/partner if applicable) need to continue to file your taxes on time each year. The Eligibility Review Unit will reassess your fees annually based on your Notice of Assessment.

The Eligibility Review Unit assesses individuals to determine their daily accommodation charge (fee).

You also must report any changes to the Eligibility Review Unit as they happen (such as changes in marital status, changes in income, etc.).



## Who can apply for a reduced fee?

The majority of long-term care residents pay a reduced fee. The reduced fee is determined by the Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care Eligibility Review Unit (ERU). To ask for a reduced charge, you must provide documents to ERU that show:

- your annual net income for the past 2 years
- the income of your spouse/partner, and/or dependent children, if applicable
- a copy of your Notice of Assessment from your last income tax return, and a
- power of attorney/enduring power of attorney, if you have one.

## What are the financial application steps?

Your care coordinator will help you identify what you need to send or what to do if you don't have all of the required documents. If you are not asking for a reduced fee, you will not need to send this type of information.

The Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care will assign your file to an eligibility review officer. If they need more information to process your financial application, they will send you a letter. This may delay the process of identifying your daily accommodation charge.

Once the eligibility review officer has all of the information they need, they will send you a letter stating how much you will need to pay. It may take 8 weeks (2 months) to receive the letter after your application is submitted. The letter will also include information on how to request a review of the accommodation charge if you believe an error was made. A request for review must be received by the Eligibility Review Unit within 30 days of when the letter was dated.

You will start paying the accommodation charge on the day you sign the lease. Make sure you set aside enough money to pay for at least one month of accommodation charge.

To be prepared, before you receive the bed offer, ask your preferred home(s) what fees you will have to pay when you arrive. (We provide more detail about receiving a bed offer on [page 10](#).)



## Are there additional costs?

Certain items are not covered by the accommodation charge. You are responsible for paying for these items while living in long-term care. These may include items such as clothing, medication, assistive devices (such as a walker or cane), eyeglasses, dental care, transportation to medical appointments, phone, cable TV, etc.

Depending on the home, you may also be asked about your financial situation, either before or when you arrive. For example, you may be asked if you:

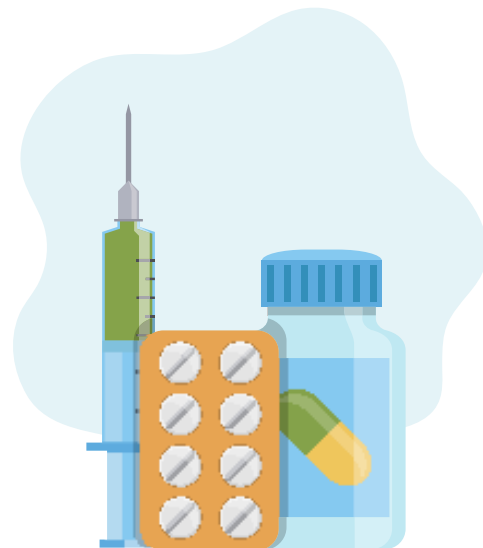
- Are eligible for other sources of insurance or services (such as Veterans' Affairs Canada, private insurance, etc.).
- Have Pharmacare coverage, private health insurance, and/or exceptional status drug coverage that requires a prescriber's request for approval.
- Have medication costs not covered by private medical coverage.

## Are medications and medical equipment provided?

Medication costs are not covered by long-term care homes. You will need to pay for any costs not covered by your private medical coverage or Pharmacare.

If you currently have your own medical equipment such as a walker or wheelchair, you will be asked to bring the equipment with you. The home will not have equipment specifically designed for you when you arrive. If you do not bring the equipment with you, you may need to rent it.

If your care needs change while you are in long-term care and you need more or different equipment, talk to the long-term care home staff.



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# 3



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## Getting ready to move to a long-term care home

### What can I do to get ready to move?

While you wait to move to a long-term care home, if possible, you can:

- Set up a joint bank account to make sure someone other than you can make payment arrangements and manage your finances if needed.
- Set aside enough money to pay your first month accommodation, and any other services you may want (such as a phone, cable TV, etc.).
- Decide if you plan to sell your home or end your rental agreement when a bed becomes available.
- Talk about your personal care wishes with your caregiver and/or family and complete a personal directive. You can find it here: <https://novascotia.ca/just/pda/>.
- Make copies of important documents (such as a power of attorney, enduring power of attorney, personal directive, etc.). You may be required to give copies of these documents to the long-term care home when you arrive.
- Talk to your family or caregiver(s) about how you or your substitute decision maker, if applicable, will share information with your family and/or caregiver(s) while you are living in the long-term care home.
- Label your personal items, including clothing, eyeglasses, hearing aids, walker, denture containers, etc.
- Consider writing down information about yourself, including your history (such as your family history, relevant information about life events, your occupation, etc.), your preferences and things that are important to you. This information will help staff get to know you when you move in.
- Decide which items to bring to make yourself feel at home. Space is limited. Not all homes have private rooms, so you may not be able to bring everything you want.





**MY RESPONSIBILITIES**  
(ex: legal, financial, etc.)

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**MY WISHES**  
(ex: personal directive, etc.)

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**MY COMFORT & NEEDS**  
(ex: favourite pillow, etc.)

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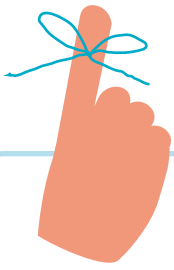
**ANY OTHER QUESTIONS  
OR CONCERNS**

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Getting ready  
to move to a  
long-term  
care home

WORKSHEET





### REMEMBER

If you are not able to move in right away, you must still pay the accommodation charge from the date the bed was made available to you.

## What will happen when I am offered a bed?

If you are waiting for long-term care at home, when a bed becomes available in one of your preferred homes, we will send information to them about you and your care needs. If they need more information to decide if they are able to meet your care needs, they may contact other people involved in your care.

If the long-term care home determines that they are able to meet your care needs, you will receive a call from us to offer you the bed. You will have **1 day** to tell us if you accept the offer.

If you accept the offer, the home will make a plan with you to fill out admission paperwork and arrange a move-in date (this may be as soon as the next day). The paperwork may include a lease agreement, consent form, pre-authorized withdrawal bank form, consent to pay additional services (such as hair care, phone, cable TV bill, etc.).

If the home is not able to meet your care needs, a care coordinator or a placement coordinator will talk to you about options for other homes.



We make every effort to help you move to the home you prefer to live in.



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## What will happen if I do not accept the offer?

If you do not accept the bed offer, it will be offered to someone else and your name will be removed from the wait list.

You can make another request for long-term care at a later time. You must wait at least 12 weeks (3 months) before making another request unless there is a significant change in your health. You will then be reassessed and start the process again.

## What is a Medical Status Report?

A medical status report provides medical information to the long-term care home. This helps them to plan your care. This report must be completed within 90 days (3 months) before you move into a long-term care home.

We will work with you to make arrangements to have your physician or nurse practitioner complete a medical status report. Please ask your physician if there is a fee for this.

## Is transportation to the home provided?

You are responsible for your transportation to the long-term care home. You should have a plan to transport yourself and your belongings to the long-term care home on moving day. This includes any future trips for private or medical appointments while you live in the home.

If you go directly from the hospital to the first available bed in a home that can meet your care needs, but it is not one of your preferred homes, you can request that the transportation cost for the transfer to your preferred home be covered. Please talk about this with the staff at the first long-term care home you move to.

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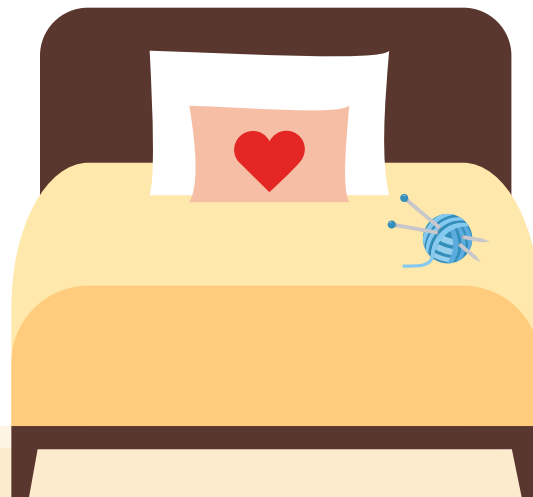
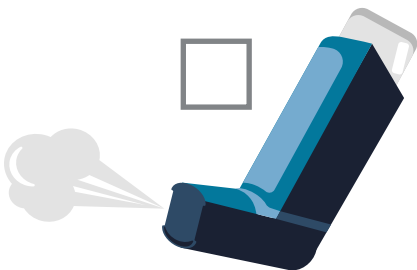
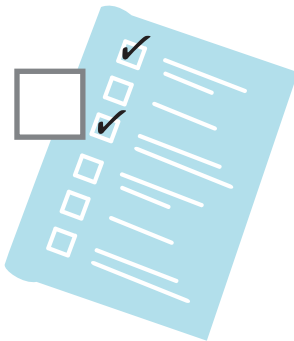


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# Moving into a long-term care home

## What should I bring to my new home?

- [ ] Your Nova Scotia Health (MSI) card
- [ ] Copies of financial and legal documents (such as a void cheque, power of attorney, personal directive, etc.)
- [ ] All of the medications you are taking in their original labelled containers
- [ ] Personal items (such as clothing, toiletries, comfort items, furniture (if approved by the home), etc.)
- [ ] Any medical equipment you need (such as a walker or cane)  
Note: This will need to be inspected and approved by the long-term care home to make sure it is safe. If you do not bring this equipment with you, you may need to rent.
- [ ] Do not bring large amounts of cash or valuables



## What can my caregiver(s) do to support my move?

There are many things your family/friends can do to help you adjust:

- Help with your move
- Bring familiar objects, such as pictures and help decorate your room on move-in day so that it feels like home
- Be supportive
- Stay involved and informed. Get to know the staff and other residents and be involved in your care planning
- Listen to your opinions, questions and concerns
- Keep their sense of humour. Laughter is a great way to break the ice and lower stress
- Visit if they can or stay connected through technology (like the internet or phone)



### Questions or concerns

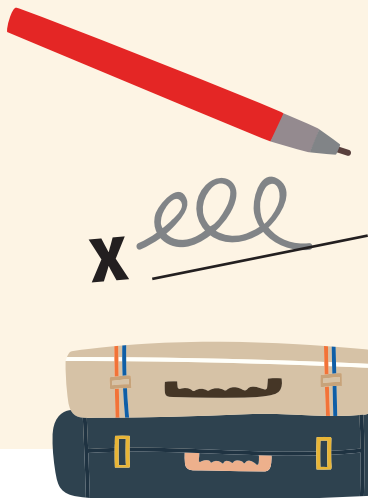
If you have questions or concerns which the staff at your long-term care home are not able to answer, please contact your care coordinator or call Nova Scotia Health Continuing Care (toll-free) at 1-800-225-7225.

## What happens on move-in day?

You will be asked to sign paperwork either just before or when you arrive at the home. This may include a lease agreement (agreement between you and the home that outlines the rights and responsibilities during your stay), payment arrangements, consent to pay for additional services (such as hair care, phone, cable TV, etc.).

You may be required to pay the first month's accommodation charge, a deposit if applicable and any other optional services.

Once you have moved in, your Nova Scotia Health Continuing Care file will stay open. It will be transferred to a care coordinator assigned to your long-term care home.



The staff at the long-term care home will:

- Give you and your family information about the home, including its policies and regulations
- Ask you to sign a lease agreement
- Advise you of your rights as a resident of the home
- Confirm any medical orders with a physician and review your medical status report
- Order all prescribed medications from the designated pharmacy
- Determine your support needs, including recreation, dietary, nursing, etc.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### TO LEARN MORE ABOUT LONG-TERM CARE AND HOME CARE:

Nova Scotia Health Continuing Care  
[www.nshealth.ca/continuing-care](http://www.nshealth.ca/continuing-care)

Phone (toll-free): 1-800-225-7225

Nova Scotia Department of Seniors and Long-  
Term Care

<https://novascotia.ca/dhw/ccs/>

### FOR CAREGIVER INFORMATION AND SUPPORT:

Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia  
[https://alzheimer.ca/en/ns/Living-with-dementia/  
Caring-for-someone/bng-term-care](https://alzheimer.ca/en/ns/Living-with-dementia/Caring-for-someone/bng-term-care)

Phone (toll-free): 1-800-611-6345

Caregivers Nova Scotia  
[https://caregiversns.org/resources/tiac/  
when-its-time-for-a-move/long-term-care/](https://caregiversns.org/resources/tiac/when-its-time-for-a-move/long-term-care/)

Phone (toll-free): 1-877-488-7390

### TO LEARN MORE ABOUT PERSONAL DIRECTIVES:

Legal Info Nova Scotia  
[https://www.legalinfo.org/i-have-a-legal-question/seniors/  
#personal-directives-health-care-treatment-and-consent-2](https://www.legalinfo.org/i-have-a-legal-question/seniors/#personal-directives-health-care-treatment-and-consent-2)

Phone (toll-free): 1-800-665-9779

Phone (Halifax area): 902-455-3135

