

Residential Care Facilities

Continuing Care serves people who need ongoing care outside of hospital, either on a long-term or short-term basis. It is a branch of the Department of Health providing access to home care, long-term care, and protection for vulnerable adults.

For those looking to enter a long-term care facility, there are three types of long-term care homes available, depending on the support you need. *Nursing homes* meet the needs of people who need a high level of nursing care; *residential care facilities (RCFs)* are homes for people who need supervisory or personal care; and *community based-options (CBOs)* provide a similar level of care to that of RCFs but these approved housing units serve a maximum of three people.

What are residential care facilities?

Department of Health residential care facilities (RCFs) provide an important option for seniors who need housing and continuing care. When home care is not appropriate and nursing home care is not required, an RCF can provide people with personal care, supervision and accommodation in a safe and supportive environment.

In Nova Scotia, RCFs operate either under the jurisdiction of the Department of Health or the Department of Community Services. Those under the Department of Health provide mainly care to seniors and are inspected by departmental staff to ensure they are operating in compliance with the *Homes for Special Care Act* and Regulations.

RCFs are mostly owned and operated by private individuals or organizations. In Nova Scotia, there are 35 RCFs licensed by the Department of Health. They range in size from 6 beds to 85 beds.

What's the profile of a RCF resident?

A typical RCF resident:

- usually suffers from chronic disease (eg. arthritis, hypertension)
- has decreased physical and/or mental abilities that reduces their independence
- has care needs that cannot safely or consistently be provided at their home
- requires supervision and/or personal care of no more than 1.5 hours per day
- does not require the services of an on-site registered nurse
- can get around on their own (with or without assistance of canes, walkers, or wheelchairs)
- has the physical and mental ability to escape from a building unassisted in the case of an emergency

What services does a RCF provide?

RCFs provide personal care that may include help with bathing and dressing, or reminders about daily routines. Personal care and supervision is provided by residential care workers available on site at all times. Residential care workers are trained in fire and life safety, medication awareness, personal care, first aid, CPR, and crisis prevention.

All residents' medications are administered by facility staff. However, stable diabetics administer their own insulin injections. The facility retains the services of a medical advisor. Residents may continue to be served by their family doctor.

Usually, residents have a private bedroom or share with another person. Common areas include: a dining and living area, bathrooms, and an outdoor space. Meal service consists of three daily meals and snacks. The menu considers resident likes and dislikes, accommodates special diets, and adheres to *Canada's Food Guide*. Staff offer daily social and recreational services and post a monthly activity calendar.

Residents can provide their ideas on such things as meals and recreation activities, either informally or, by participating in a facility resident-family council.

How do I get admitted to a RCF?

Applications are made through the Department of Health by calling 1-800-225-7225. You will be provided the details of the application process and a Care Coordinator will visit to assess your care needs and help identify the best method of having your needs met.

What would a RCF cost me as a resident?

Eligible individuals that are referred by the Department of Health for admission to a Department of Health funded Residential Care Facility pay an accommodation charge. If you cannot afford the maximum accommodation charge, you may undergo an income test to determine a reduced charge.