

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ... IN LONG TERM CARE



Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT IS LONG TERM CARE?

Long term care is designed for people with complex, unpredictable medical needs who are unable to remain safely at home or in a supportive living accommodation and who require 24-hour onsite Registered Nurse assessment and/or treatment services.

Long term care is provided in nursing homes and auxiliary hospitals, both of which may be referred to as “long term care homes”. In long term care, residents receive accommodation (i.e. a place to live), meals and have access to 24-hour onsite professional nursing and personal care services. In addition, case management, allied health services (i.e. Social Worker, Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Recreation Therapist and Dietitian) and other consultative services, including physician visits, are also provided onsite.

Long Term Care homes in Alberta that are government funded and operated either by Alberta Health Services (AHS) directly or by Continuing Care Providers (under contract with AHS) are referred to as ‘*designated*’ long term care homes. As a contracted Continuing Care Provider with AHS, Intercare operates three (3) *designated* long care homes in Calgary, Alberta.



The costs associated with the provision of care-related services (i.e. health and personal care services) for individuals living in a *designated* Long Term Care home are paid for by the Government. By contrast however, the Alberta Government requires individuals living in *designated* Long Term Care homes to pay ‘*accommodation fees*’ (i.e. rental fees), as well as costs associated with any additional care or support services they request that are not included in the resident’s assessed plan of care (i.e. care plan). *Accommodation fees* are set by the Alberta Government and are in place to help cover the costs of accommodation-related services at *designated* Long Term Care homes including, for example: rent, utilities, meals, linen/towel laundering, light housekeeping and building amenities.

It is important to note that ‘*staffing ratios*’ (i.e. the number of care staff per number of residents) in *designated* Long Term Care homes in Alberta, including those of Intercare, are both set and funded by the Government of Alberta.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Residents have choice, voice and control over how they would like to see their day go within the care home. They are free to rest, eat and socialize at times which work for them and staff work hard to be flexible and available to provide assistance where needed to maintain this flexibility. Although meal times in the dining room are at set times, food can be provided upon request at other times throughout the day. Recreation activities are also available throughout the daytime hours, however less so on evenings and weekends making these important times for family visits and outings.

CLINICAL CARE SERVICES

I'd like to change the Attending Physician that was assigned to me. How can this be done?

The resident/family should make an appointment with the care home's Director of Care (DOC) or Case Manager (CM) to discuss their particular concern(s) with the assigned Attending Physician, to determine if the concerns can be resolved. If concerns cannot be resolved, the DOC or CM will provide names of alternate Attending Physicians who are accepting new residents at the home. It is then the resident's and/or family's responsibility to select an alternate Attending Physician. Intercare's Medical Director, as well as the original and alternate Attending Physicians, will be informed and the change will be made thereafter.

How often will my Attending Physician see me once I am admitted?

Attending Physicians attend the care homes weekly and will schedule visits with residents on an "as needed" basis. Residents may also see their Attending Physicians during care conference(s), medication reviews and at their annual medical examinations.

In addition, an "on-call" Physician is available after hours including evenings, nights, weekends and statutory holidays for medical emergencies.

How will my medications be supplied and will I have to pay for them?

External pharmacy providers are contracted by AHS for all *designated* Long Term Care homes (including those of Intercare) to supply residents with medications prescribed for them by their Attending Physician.

AHS covers the cost of prescribed medications that are included in the 'Long Term Care Formulary'. If a medication prescribed for a resident is not covered under the AHS Formulary, the care home's contracted pharmacy provider or the unit nurse will contact the resident/family to advise of the cost of the medication prior to supplying it. A bill for the cost of medications that are not covered by AHS will be issued directly to the resident/family by the contracted pharmacy provider for Intercare's long term care homes and payment for same must then be made directly to the contracted pharmacy provider by the resident/family.

New medication orders are delivered to the home daily, Monday to Friday. All other medications are delivered weekly.

Please note: Individuals residing in long term care homes are no longer eligible for Blue Cross coverage for medications. As such, the use of Blue Cross is prohibited for medications in long term care by Blue Cross.

OCCUPATIONAL / PHYSICAL THERAPY SERVICES

Will my family member be provided with equipment on admission? For example, a wheelchair.

Care homes have a limited inventory of specialized equipment including, but not limited to: wheelchairs, wheelchair cushions, therapeutic mattresses etc. Equipment is allocated to residents once an Occupational Therapy assessment has been completed to determine appropriateness. If it is determined that a resident will require equipment, the Occupational Therapist will look at the equipment available to determine if an appropriate match is available. It is not guaranteed that equipment will be readily available upon admission, however, the

Occupational Therapist can work with residents and their families to assist with finding rental options, if needed, in the short term.

I need to have a wheelchair ordered. What is the process?

The care home's Occupational or Physical Therapist orders wheelchairs through the Alberta Aids to Daily Living (AADL) program. Orders take approximately eight (8) to twelve (12) weeks for the government to process. The therapist will arrange a 'trial wheelchair(s)' to determine the specifications of the wheel chair to order for the resident.



While awaiting the arrival of his/her own wheelchair through the AADL program, the resident may use a loaner wheelchair, if one is available, or rent a wheelchair through a medical supply vendor or the Red Cross. Please contact the Occupational Therapist if you require assistance in choosing a vendor, or determining appropriate rental equipment.

I have already ordered a wheelchair/ walker through another site prior to my admission to Intercare. What happens to it?

Prior to admission, new residents and their family members should let the care home's Therapeutics Department know if equipment had been previously arranged for them at another site.

The Occupational or Physical Therapist at the care home where the Resident is transferring from will coordinate with the equipment vendor to ensure the resident's equipment is transferred to Intercare for the resident.

What kind of exercise therapy is available at the care home for Residents?

Residents are assessed by a Physiotherapist to determine if a rehabilitation program is suitable for them based on current functional abilities, diagnosis and the potential for the promotion and/or maintenance of the resident's current abilities.

If a resident meets the criteria for a rehabilitation program, the number of days of involvement will be determined by the Physiotherapist. Exercises can include group exercises or individualized one-to-one programs.

One-to-one programs may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Passive Range of Motion (PROM) (while seated or in bed) to address limited active range of motion, promote joint mobility and reduce risk of pressure ulcers.
- Seated exercises: adapted bike ergo meter, ball games, extremity movements
- Standing exercises: at parallel bars or wall bars
- Ambulation (or walking) in parallel bars or appropriate gait aid with assistance



Therapy programs are implemented and monitored by the Occupational and Physiotherapists and are then performed and carried out by Rehabilitation Therapy Assistants under the supervision of the Therapists.

Please note:

- ✓ Long term care homes do not have the resources to provide active rehabilitation on an ongoing basis. It is therefore important to discuss rehabilitation involvement opportunities with the Physical Therapist.
- ✓ The goal of movement activities and exercise therapy is to promote and maintain resident mobility and function, rather than rehabilitation or reversal of admission condition. On-going participation is based on the resident's tolerance, motivation/compliance and/or change in status.

DIETARY SERVICES

How are special dietary needs/requests accommodated?

Registered Dietitians (RD) complete a Nutrition Assessment for every resident within the first six (6) weeks of admission. Based on the assessment, the RD may recommend Therapeutic Diets, Texture Modified Diets and Nutrition Supplements. Special Dietary needs and requests are accommodated as deemed clinically necessary by the Dietitian.



RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

How often is personal clothing and/or linens laundered at the home?

In-house laundry service for residents' personal laundry is available for an additional monthly fee. Linens and towels are laundered weekly or on an 'as needed basis'. Personal clothing is laundered on a daily basis.

To help minimize the risk of personal laundry being lost, personal clothing is (and should be) labelled with the resident's name. Items are brought to the laundry department from all care units for cleaning and are then delivered back to the residents in their rooms.

If bringing additional clothes for the resident, the clothes should be placed in a bag that is clearly labelled on the outside of the bag with the resident's name. The bag should be given to the Staff Nurse on the care unit who will send the clothing to the laundry department for labelling. If a resident has lost their personal clothing, the resident or their family members are encouraged to go to the laundry department and see if they can identify any missing clothes. Once they identify their clothing, the laundry staff can then label their clothes immediately to avoid clothing being lost again.

Are Resident rooms cleaned daily?

Housekeeping services are provided to all resident rooms on a daily basis and in other general/public areas throughout the care home during the day and evening.

After housekeeping hours, or in case of any emergencies, a resident or their family member can request the nursing staff to assist the resident with their emergency need.

What items are not recommended to bring into the home?

There are some items that are not recommended within the care home. Please do not bring in items such as microwave, kettle, electric heating pads, items of value, etc. and check first with the care unit's Case Manager before bringing in any unusual items.

How does the food menu operate in the home?

Meals are prepared for residents following a four (4) week cycle of meals that is planned based on Canada's Food Guide and approved by Intercare's Registered Dietitians. This includes breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks, as well as special nourishments.

The menu changes twice a year, rotating between a spring/summer menu (May-Oct) and a fall/winter menu (Nov-April). Meal menus can be found posted in each dining room and inside the main kitchen. Residents are offered a first and second entrée choice at lunch and supper. Sandwiches are offered daily as per menus.

***Where are meals served within the care home?***

All meals are served in dining rooms that are located on resident care units within the home. Residents are assigned to a dining room located on or near the care unit on which they reside. For quality of life and safety purposes, meals are to be taken in the dining rooms where residents can socialize with others and be observed, monitored and/or assisted by staff while they are eating and drinking.

In-room tray service at meal time is only provided when residents are required to isolate in their room due to illness, are recovering, are palliative/at end of life or due to other extenuating circumstances. To ensure appropriate supervision by staff in dining rooms during regular meal services and supervision for those residents eating in their rooms, in-room tray service is provided once the dining room service ends.

Residents are permitted to have a mini bar size fridge in their room for their own personal food or snacks. Families are welcome to bring food/snacks that their loved ones enjoy, but are asked to be mindful of the resident's assessed diet texture and restrictions when doing so.

Please note: For safety related reasons, residents are not permitted to cook on the care units.

RECREATION THERAPY SERVICES***How do I know what activities are available within the facility?***

Recreation calendars are posted in each resident's room, available on the care units and can be emailed to the primary family contact. You may request a copy of the calendar from recreation staff, or take a picture of it on your phone for reference. These calendars specify what activity is planned for each day of a particular month (programs are subject to change.) Daily activities are written on white boards outside the dining rooms on each unit, including the location of each program.

Can I volunteer in some of the recreation programs?

Family and friends are welcome and encouraged to join in any of the recreation programs and activities. Intercare's Volunteer Coordinator can offer an orientation and then you may assist on outings, in craft programs, exercises, games and a variety of other activities.

If you have particular skills or interests that you would like to share with residents at the care home, please contact Intercare's Volunteer Coordinator to find out how you can become involved by calling 403-255-4969 (ext. 116).

Are church services regularly provided at the care homes?

There are a variety of weekly church services regularly offered at the care homes. Church service schedules are posted throughout the care homes.

CARE HOME ADMINISTRATION

I requested a private room prior to my admission. What is the process for getting one?

Intercare endeavours to accommodate each request for a private room as quickly as possible. Newly admitted residents are immediately placed on the care home's existing waiting list for a private room or a larger semi-private room. Residents are offered a private or larger semi-private room based on the order of their admission. The room offered is determined by what is available at the time the resident reaches the top of the wait list.

Please note: Due to the number of specialized care units within Intercare's system of long term care homes and varying resident acuties, priority for resident transfers to a private room at the care home is based upon a resident's on-going care needs, as opposed to the amount of time that a resident has spent on the internal waiting list.

This long term care home was not my first choice for a long term care placement. When/how will I know when a placement is available at my preferred long term care site?

AHS/Calgary Zone's Transition Services department will notify the resident and/or family that a bed has become available in the preferred site. The resident's discharge date from the Intercare care home will be arranged by the resident/family together with AHS/Transition Services and the receiving care home site. Intercare will fax pertinent information to the receiving care home site. The resident/family is responsible for transportation and payment of any associated costs related to the resident's transportation to the receiving care home site.

Why are hairdressing charges added to the Accommodation Invoice and not deducted from Resident Trust Accounts instead?

Hairdressers at the care home are contracted by Intercare to provide hair salon services to residents in Intercare's long term care homes. As such, it is an accounting requirement that the contracted hairdressers be paid by EFT directly from Intercare and **not** directly by residents in long term care with cash or from Resident Trust Accounts.

Can families privately hire a companion to come into the care home to be with a resident?

If a resident/family is choosing to retain the services of a private companion, the resident/family **MUST** notify the Site Administrator, Director of Care, Case Manager or Social Worker.

In addition, the following **MUST** be provided to the Site Administrator, **prior to commencement** of the private companion's services to the resident:

1. A copy of a clear **Criminal Records Check** (current within three (3) months of the private companion's service commencement); and
2. Confirmation of **Comprehensive General Liability Insurance** (\$2 million dollars minimum).

Intercare does not provide private companion services and shall, in no way, be held liable or responsible for companion services provided to the resident by a private companion that has been retained by a resident or family.

Please note: The resident/family is solely responsible for the monitoring of companion services and for all billing processes for the companion services rendered, including all payments to the private companion.

What is the process for booking Handi-Bus?

If a resident is registered in the Handi-Bus system prior to coming to the care home, the care home's unit clerk will need to register the resident to the care home to ensure that the Handi-Bus system sends its transport vehicle to the care home location. In order to complete this change request, the care home's unit clerk will complete the required registration papers and send them to Handi-bus on the resident's behalf.

Please note:

- ✓ It is the resident's / family's responsibility to book all personal / social trips (i.e. trips to the mall, restaurant or family-booked appointments);
- ✓ A minimum of four (4) days' notice is required for all trip requests;
- ✓ The resident/family is responsible to provide bus tickets for all personal/social outings, non-medically necessary and/or non-urgent appointments that they book; **and**
- ✓ The care home will **only** book medically necessary trips.

Why is setting up a Resident Trust Account at the Care Home important for residents?

Resident trust funds are set up and used for the disbursement of monies to residents for certain recreation activities, outings, personal items and/or other small purchases. Residents are able to make cash withdrawals directly from their trust account.

If residents are not able to handle money on their own, staff can make small purchases from 'in house' vending machines for residents. Equivalent funds are taken out of the resident's trust account to cover the purchase that was made by Intercare's corporate accounting office, on behalf of the resident.

The maximum amount of resident trust that can be dispersed at one time is one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per resident, per day.

Please note: Setting up a Resident Trust Account ensures that the resident's funds are securely held for the resident, in safekeeping, by Intercare. A separate and controlled accounting record is maintained by Intercare for all Resident Trust Accounts and a copy of the trust record is provided to residents / families on a monthly basis and also upon request.

How can deposits to Resident Trust Accounts be made?

Deposits (via cash, cheque or money order) can be made in person during regular business hours from Monday to Friday at the care home's main reception. Cheques and money orders can also be mailed to the resident's care home or directly to the Calgary Corporate Office, Accounts Receivable (A/R) department for processing.

What about parking for myself or my family?

Due to limited parking availability at the care home, Intercare has implemented controlled paid parking. Visitors must ensure that they have purchased a ticket to park in an Intercare parking lot to avoid being ticketed or towed at the owner's sole expense.

Payment options for hourly, daily or weekly parking passes are debit or credit card only; cash or coins are not accepted.

Families can ask to be placed on a wait list for a monthly parking pass, however please be advised that the availability of such passes is **extremely limited**. Monthly parking passes are assigned per vehicle/license plate and are not transferrable. Monthly parking passes must be paid for directly by the family member each month via cash or cheque.

Please see the care home's receptionist for further information about parking at Intercare.



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