



BUSINESS PLAN

2024-25

Seniors and Long-term Care

© Crown copyright, Province of Nova Scotia, 2024

Budget 2024-25: Business Plan
February 2024
ISBN 978-1-77448-569-9

Department of Seniors and Long-term Care

2024-25 Priority Actions in Support of Government's Business Plan

The Department of Seniors and Long-term Care (SLTC) supports the health and well-being of older adults and is mandated with improving the quality of care for those accessing Continuing Care Services. The 2024-25 Business Plan reflects the priorities outlined in the Minister's Mandate and the [Action for Health Plan](#).

Long-term Care Infrastructure

- The Department's Long-Term Care Infrastructure Renewal Plan supports current and anticipated needs using a balanced approach of replacement, renovation, and building additional rooms to ensure Nova Scotians have appropriate access to quality long-term care. Government announced the infrastructure plan to renovate and build approximately 3,500 long-term care single rooms by 2027 and an additional 2,200 spaces by 2032, which will be done through a multi-year approach across the province.
 - The 3,500 beds will keep advancing through various stages. It is expected that 10 more facilities will break ground by spring 2024, and more are expected in the summer 2024.
 - The new 48-room facility, Kiknu Long-term Care, is expected to open to occupancy in the spring of 2024. As the first long-term care home on a First Nation community in Nova Scotia, it will provide culturally specific long-term care to the elders from Eskasoni and the surrounding communities. Mi'kmaq culture has been a primary consideration in the design and in how care will incorporate First Nations culture and values.
 - Requests for proposals will be issued for the two new long-term care facilities in Westville and Kings County in the fall of 2024.
 - Conversion of 21 assisted living spaces at Yarmouth Heights into nursing home rooms.
 - Mahone Nursing Home, a 96-bed replacement facility, is expected to open to occupancy in summer 2024. Carefield, a 16-bed replacement facility in Dominion, is scheduled to open in winter 2025.
- The Department will be testing the use of a personal device that records and monitors the wearer's position and features an integrated nurse call button with customizable notifications to staff, in licensed and funded long-term care facilities.

Long-term Care

- To promote accountability and transparency, long-term care facilities are required to demonstrate funding is spent on the intended purpose as set out under SLTC funding policies.
- Facilities are receiving a 20% increase to food budgets; directly improving the quality of meals provided to long-term care residents.
- Long-term care facilities continue to work toward achieving staffing levels necessary to provide an average of 4.1 hours of direct care per resident, per day. This initiative will ensure that residents receive the same level of care, regardless of where they live in the province.

- The Department is currently working with long-term care service providers to renew service agreements to improve consistency, sustainability, financial accountability, and quality of care.
- The Department will continue to support emergency preparedness by ensuring effective emergency management processes are in place in licensed long-term care facilities.

Home and Community Care

- Direct funding program parameters have been standardized and the application process for Nova Scotians has been simplified. We will continue to work with agencies and Nova Scotia Health to further reduce wait times for home support services.
- Beginning this year, client fees were removed from Home Oxygen Services and the Specialized Equipment Program to better support Nova Scotians in accessing these services when needed.
- The Department will continue to work with the Department of Community Services (DCS) to address the recommendations of the Human Rights Review and Remedy for the Findings of Systemic Discrimination Against Nova Scotians with Disabilities. In 2024/25 SLTC will work closely with DCS on a comprehensive data collection strategy, individualized funding supports, and the shared services project to help people move from long-term care into community.

Recruitment and Retention

- The Department will continue to work with employers to ensure that a stable workforce is available now and into the future.
- Long-term care assistants and infection control designate nurses, first introduced in LTC as a temporary measure during COVID-19, have become integral members of the care team. Starting in 2024-25, long-term care assistants and infection control designate nurses will become permanent members of the care team in LTC.
- The Department will continue to seek and implement innovative training approaches to support individuals in becoming a Continuing Care Assistant (CCA), like piloting a new modernized program that is 6 months long.
- Optimizing clinical scopes of practice is an important part of providing high-quality care to residents/clients and supports career growth opportunities for the Continuing Care Workforce. The Department is launching a pilot program to support RNs employed in nursing homes and by VON, to undergo additional education to receive the advanced practice certification needed to prescribe medications to Continuing Care clients.
- In 2019, the Expert Panel on Long-Term Care recommended that residential care facilities have access to licensed practical nurses (LPNs) as a clinical resource to support resident care. Temporary resources were put in place to support access to LPNs in RCFs. Starting in 2024-25, these temporary resources will be made permanent.
- The CCA to Practical Nursing Bridging Program pilot is providing 25 CCAs currently working in continuing care with free tuition and books to complete the Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) program through Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC). This approach creates a community of learners and retains LPNs in the sector through a 2-year return of service agreement.
- The Department will continue to support international recruitment with a recruitment team who support continuing care employers.

Aging Well in Community

- Age Friendly Community Grants support community efforts that help older Nova Scotians stay active, healthy, and engaged in their communities.
- The Department will continue to partner with NSCC to offer the Centre for Rural Aging and Health (CORAH) hubs which provide older adults with information and education, linking them with valuable services and resources, and providing opportunities for them to connect with others in their communities.
- The CAPABLE (Community Aging in Place: Advancing Better Living for Elders) pilot program will support up to 300 older adults to improve safety, function and independence so that they can remain living in their own homes in their communities.
- The Department supports organizations with a provincial reach that align with our mandate such as the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia, Caregivers Nova Scotia and Community Links to help older adults age well at home and in their communities.

Financial Summary

Departmental Expenses Summary (\$ thousands)			
	2023 -2024 Estimate	2023-2024 Forecast	2024-2025 Estimate
Programs and Services			
General Administration	1,207	821	809
Strategic Direction and Accountability			
Corporate Support and Strategic Initiatives	1,922	1,876	2,102
Continuing Care	6,097	6,402	6,822
Service Delivery and Supports			
Client Services	5,910	5,989	5,805
Home Care	374,833	395,397	382,615
Long-term Care	941,660	1,028,412	964,557
Amortization	349	349	---
Total - Departmental Expenses	1,331,978	1,439,246	1,362,710
Ordinary Recoveries	---	3	---
Funded Staff (# of FTEs)			
Department Funded Staff	125.5	114.7	127.5
Note: For Ordinary Revenues, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 2 For TCA Purchase Requirements, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 1			