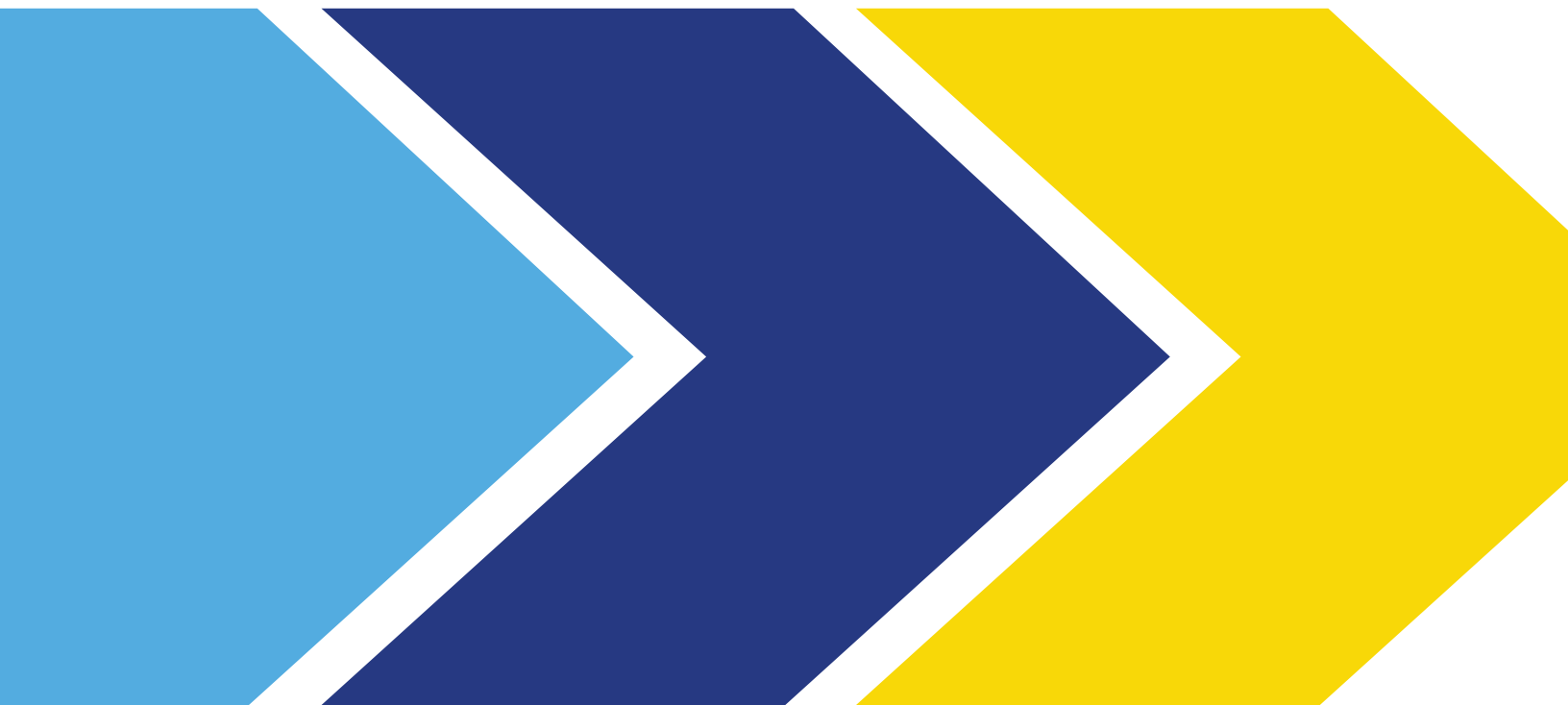


BUSINESS PLAN

2022-23



Seniors & Long-term Care



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Budget 2022-23: Business Plan
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Minister's Message

I am pleased to present the 2022-23 Business Plan for the newly formed Department of Seniors and Long-term Care.

The Covid-19 Pandemic hit all Nova Scotians hard – but particularly older adults. Their vulnerability to the disease and the need to protect them from its worst effects exacerbated weaknesses in our systems and left many feeling isolated. This in turn added an immense burden to caregivers – professional and unpaid – who worked to exhaustion for two years.



I began my tenure as Minister with an ambitious agenda of improvements I wanted to get underway based on my past experiences as a healthcare provider in various continuing care settings and the concerns of my constituents. I am thrilled to report that work on these priorities is well underway.

In 2022-23 we will continue to build on that momentum with a range of initiatives aimed at ensuring that older adults receive the supports they need at all stages of the ageing continuum – from fit seniors actively contributing to their communities to those requiring progressive levels of help with the activities of daily living.

In our first six months, we invested in the new Seniors Care Grant to help seniors maintain their homes and complete difficult tasks. We committed almost \$57 million to attract and retain continuing care workers and add more beds, and another \$66 million a year to give Continuing Care Assistants (CCAs) an almost 23 percent raise. Likewise, we are doing everything in our power to recruit and train our new and existing professional caregivers with a goal of 600 nurses and 1,400 CCAs.

This year we are taking decisive steps to support the highest possible standards of care. Building on over \$100 million in investments to attract and retain continuing care workers, over \$25 million will be available in 2022-23 to lift the standards of care to at least 4.1 hours of care per resident in nursing homes for those that can achieve it. Later this year we plan to introduce a new consolidated Continuing Care Act to include the standardized hours of care per resident and to provide a modernized foundation to support our ageing population over the decades to come.

Our plan to add 2,500 new single-bed rooms to our long-term care inventory through a multi-year, province-wide construction and renovation plan is already underway, and the coming year will see progress on that front.

“Original signed by”

Barbara Adams
Minister of Seniors and Long-term Care

Departmental Mandate

New Department of Seniors and Long-term Care

Seniors and Long-term Care supports the social and economic well-being of older adults across the ageing continuum and is mandated with improving the quality of care for those accessing Continuing Care Services.

The Department's mandate is implemented through the following divisions/offices:

- Continuing Care
 - Home and Community Care
 - Long-term Care
 - Client Services
 - Investigation and Compliance
 - Eligibility Review
 - Adult Protection
- Infrastructure
- Policy, Planning, and Corporate Services

Mandate Actions

In September 2021, the Minister responsible for Seniors and Long-term Care received the following highlighted items in their mandate letter. Departmental initiatives planned for 2022/23 to advance these items are highlighted below.

Renovate and build over 2,500 new single-bed rooms over three years.

- Five facilities are currently under construction and 22 facilities advancing through the facility development approval process across the multi-year timeline.

Seek Federal Government funding for at least an additional 1,000 new private rooms on top of the 2,500 for a total of 3,500 new single-bed rooms.

- Ongoing discussions with Federal Government on additional funding for long-term care beds.

Ensure that no couple who is able to be together will be separated in long-term care.

- The Department tracks applications to long-term care facilities with a couples placement request to ensure this legislative commitment is fulfilled.

Require, as one of the first priorities, NSHA officials to engage with representatives of all 133 long-term care properties for data including how many single rooms exist to inform a plan.

- In partnership with Nova Scotia Health and service providers, an accurate bed inventory has been created. Investments in a new bed placement system will enable better integration of client placements within the inventory of new and existing beds.

Establish, by the end of our first year of PC government, a plan for the expansion and renovation of existing properties as well as the development of new accommodations.

- Facility Condition Assessments of existing facilities began in late 2021-22 and will continue into 2022-23, to inform the Long-term Care Infrastructure Renewal Plan.

Require that funding for resident care programs and food be done through a system of flow-through envelopes.

- Planning is underway to define the key quality measures that will form the basis of new service agreements with accountability measures related to funding of long-term care providers.
- The Department is implementing an interim measure of flow through envelopes in Fall 2022-23.

Amend the Homes for Special Care Act to ensure that every long-term care facility must maintain staff care levels of combined RNs, LPNs and CCAs sufficient to satisfy at least 4.1 hours of care per resident. To reach the recommended levels of staffing care, we would require an additional 600 nurses (a combination of RNs and LPNs) and 1,400 CCAs.

- Building on over \$100 million in investments to attract and retain continuing care workers, the Department is working with facilities to determine readiness and resource requirements to provide the target number of hours of care per resident.
- Over \$25 million will be available in 2022-23 to increase the standards of care to at least 4.1 hours of care per resident in nursing homes for those that can achieve it.
 - Developing amendments to establish this standard of care in legislation.

Reinstate the CCA training grant that was cancelled in 2013.

- In December 2021, the Province announced a \$22 million investment over the next three years to cover 100 per cent of tuition costs for over 2,000 students in continuing care assistant programs.
- The introduction of a work and learn program will expose students to the worksite earlier and provide more opportunities to earn money while they learn.

Make the CCA registry mandatory.

- The mandatory Continuing Care Assistants Registry went live on February 2, 2022. The Department will continue to monitor registrations and utilize this information for the purpose of workforce planning.

Establish a Seniors' Care Grant for help with household services.

- Launched in December 2021, the Seniors' Care Grant continues to accept applications for up to \$500 to support the cost of household services.

Other Areas of Focus

Recruitment and Retention of Continuing Care Assistants

The Department continues to focus on continuing care workforce capacity by ensuring investments in recruitment and retention improve access and quality of care. Recent investments include:

- \$66.3 million per year to increase CCA wages by nearly 23 percent,
- \$22 million over the next two years to cover tuition costs for CCA programs,
- \$8 million to long-term care homes to offer their casual and part-time employees full-time positions or to hire more staff to provide direct care,
- \$3.1 million to hire temporary staff through employment agencies,
- \$3.1 million in tuition rebates for current continuing care assistant students,
- \$2.1 million to recruit continuing care assistants nationally and internationally,
- \$1.4 million to improve staff scheduling and delivery of care,
- \$1.3 million additional funds over 2 years into the professional development fund that supports workforce training and educational activities,
- \$1.3 million additional funds over 2 years into the HR innovation fund to attract workers to parts of the province where staffing is most challenging, and
- \$630,000 to double the number of people (to 600) having their prior skills and experience recognized.

Expert panel

In January 2019, the Department of Health and Wellness (DHW) released the report from the Minister's Expert Panel on Long-term Care. The report made 22 recommendations on how to improve the quality of long-term care (LTC) in the province.

The department has completed work in key areas, with significant progress being made on recommendations. Over \$14 million dollars will be invested in 2022-23 to further these recommendations, including:

- \$3M to enhance recruitment and retention in LTC and home care,
 - Health Association Nova Scotia (HANS) hired 6 recruiters to provide dedicated human resource support to Continuing Care sector,
- \$6.4M to provide more equitable access to allied health providers. This funding supported 71.27 FTEs and is ongoing,
- \$2.5M for more than 13 nurse practitioners to work in LTC and community,
- \$2.9M for NSH to develop a proposal for primary care coverage 24/7 coverage for Long-term Care.

Workplace Safety Initiatives

Ensuring a safe work environment with practices that prevent workplace injuries and supports timely returns post-injury is key to successful retention efforts, predictable workforce availability and safe quality care for clients. It also contributes to slowing growth of WCB premiums.

In 2022-23, continued efforts to support safe workplaces with over \$3 million dollars towards:

- implementation of a Home Care (HC) Lift Loan Program,
- the continuation of Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) to the sector,
- supports for safety programming and training, development of eLearning and in-person training tools, with staff backfills to support participation, and
- supports for the Stay at Work / Return to work program and support for continued implementation of existing programs.

Technology and Innovation

Continuous quality improvement also means being open to doing things differently, including leveraging technologies that support efficient and high-quality care.

We will complete the multi-year implementation of the interRAI client assessment in nursing homes to support better standardized assessment of a person's care needs at the individual, facility, and system level.

Additionally, we will fully utilize the newly implemented long-term care bed placement digital system which will support higher efficiency of the long-term care bed capacity that exists within the province.

We will continue to support home care agencies in implementing a new digital system to support more efficient service delivery, improved communication and better data for system planning.

Financial Summary

Departmental Expenses Summary (\$ thousands)			
Programs and Services	2021 -2022 Estimate	2021-2022 Forecast	2022-2023 Estimate
General Administration	780	1,103	1,087
Corp. Support/Strat. Initiatives	1,827	2,454	3,361
Continuing Care	3,846	4,040	5,709
Seniors' Initiatives	2,136	1,792	1,633
Adult Protection	3,078	3,067	3,164
Home Care	294,368	297,166	348,231
Long Term Care	755,745	820,551	841,085
Total - Departmental Expenses	<u>1,061,780</u>	<u>1,130,173</u>	<u>1,204,270</u>
Ordinary Recoveries	50	50	613
Funded Staff (# of FTEs)			
Department Funded Staff	88.5	87.0	119.5

Note:
For Ordinary Revenues, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 2
For TCA Purchase Requirements, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 1