Business Plan

2023-24

Seniors and Long-Term Care

NOVA SCOTIA

Department of Seniors and Long-term Care
2023-24 Priority Actions in Support of Government's Business Plan

The Department of Seniors and Long-term Care (SLTC) 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 2023-24 Business Plan reflects the priorities outlined in the Minister's Mandate and the Action for Health plan.

Long-term Care (LTC)

- This will be the first full year that LTC facilities have moved to operating within a protected and unprotected funding model that ensures that money that is supposed to go toward direct care staffing and food costs, gets used for its intended purpose. The Department is working closely with facilities during the transition to be successful in implementation.

- Support to LTC facilities in achieving staff care levels of an average of 4.1 hours of direct care per resident per day continues, ensuring residents receive the same level of direct care, regardless of where they live in the province.

- Implementation of the interRAI resident assessment in all Nursing Homes in Nova Scotia continues, with all homes completing onboarding by 2023-24. This tool allows health professionals to complete standardized resident assessments to inform care planning.

Home and Community Care

- The Department will improve access to direct funding programs as a home support option and continue to work with agencies and Nova Scotia Health to further reduce wait times for home support services.

- Approaches to care delivery that increase independence for clients will include new VON nursing clinics and an expanded Halifax clinic; allowing more people to receive nursing services in the community, rather than waiting at home for a nurse.

- New electronic medication dispensers will reduce medication-only nursing visits by 96% for some people.

- The introduction of three CAPABLE teams (including a nurse, occupational therapist, and handyperson) will work with individuals to increase their confidence, strength, and independence.

- Worker safety is supported through the home lift loan program and continued investments in safety equipment and emergency planning.

Recruitment and Retention

- The Department will continue to provide free tuition for CCA students, building on the success of supporting over 1,000 students in 22-23.

- The work and learn program will continue to be available to CCA students, providing a unique opportunity to gain real life experiences in continuing care, working two days and studying three days per week.
- The Department will continue to support international and national recruitment with a recruitment team who supports continuing care employers.
- $945,000 will be allocated to the Human Resource Innovation Fund to support new and innovative HR practices, intended to increase recruitment and retention of health care workers in continuing care. Projects include education programs to increase the skills of those already working in continuing care, recruitment campaigns, and orientation programs.

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. The plan to renovate and build approximately 3,500 long-term care single rooms by 2027 includes:
  - Adding about 600 more single long-term care rooms to the system, bringing the total net new single rooms in the long-term care system to 1,200 – including more than 800 new rooms in seven new facilities in the Central Zone and approximately 70 additional rooms in four replacement facilities currently under development throughout the province;
  - Improving 2,300 long-term care rooms throughout the province;
  - Adding additional LTC rooms through conversion of existing infrastructure; and
  - Exploring additional opportunities to add rooms.
- Strategic infrastructure investments will incorporate facility condition assessments, maintenance standards, and needs of service providers to continue to provide safe and quality care aging infrastructure. Working towards the goal of an accessible Nova Scotia by 2030, all new and renovated nursing homes are designed to meet applicable accessibility standards in health care facilities.

Aging Well in Community

- Through Age Friendly Communities (AFC) Grants and other funding initiatives, SLTC supports organizations with a provincial reach that align with our mandate such as Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia, Caregivers Nova Scotia and Community Links to help older adults age well at home and in their communities.
- Process improvements to the Seniors Care Grant in 23/24 will further streamline the application process, enhancing the capacity of the program to provide timely, adaptable, and flexible financial support to older Nova Scotians in their homes and communities.

Financial Summary

Departmental Expenses Summary ($ thousands)			
Programs and Services	2022 -2023 Estimate	2022-2023 Forecast	2023-2024 Estimate
General Administration	1,087	1,550	1,207
Strategic Direction and Accountability			
Corporate Support and Strategic Initiatives	1,164	1,212	1,922
Continuing Care	5,942	5,602	6,097
Service Delivery and Supports			
Client Services	5,309	5,451	5,910
Home Care	349,683	368,247	374,833
Long-term Care	841,085	1,039,147	941,660
Amortization	---	---	349
Total - Departmental Expenses	1,204,270	1,421,209	1,331,978
Ordinary Recoveries	613	613	---
Funded Staff (# of FTEs)			
Department Funded Staff	119.5	105.1	125.5

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