

2024 PROVINCIAL RESOURCES FOR END-OF-LIFE PLANNING ISSUES

BRITISH COLUMBIA

End-of-life care is supportive and compassionate care that focuses on comfort, quality of life, respect for personal health care treatment decisions, support for the family, and psychological, cultural and spiritual concerns for dying people and their families. Palliative care is specialized medical care for people with serious illness – whatever the diagnosis. Care can be provided wherever the client is living, whether at home, in hospice, an assisted living residence or a long-term care home.

End-of-life and palliative care services aim to preserve an individual's comfort, dignity and quality of life as their needs change, and to offer on-going support for family and friends. These services include the following: care co-ordination and consultation, pain and symptom management, community nursing services, community rehabilitation services, home support, respite for the caregiver and hospice care.

How do I arrange for end-of-life care and palliative care services?

If you are interested in receiving end-of-life care or palliative care services or know of someone who might be in need of these services, you can contact the home and community care office of your health authority or you can have a health care professional make a referral on your behalf. For more information about how to arrange for care or eligibility for home and community care services, please see:

- [How to Arrange for Care](#)
- [Are You Eligible?](#)

If you or someone you know has a terminal illness and would like assistance planning an expected death at home, please see:

- [Expected/Planned Deaths in British Columbia](#)

If you or someone you know are seeking medical assistance in dying, please see:

- [Medical Assistance in Dying](#)

Is there a cost for end-of-life care and palliative care services?

There may be a cost for end-of-life care or palliative care services, depending on the type of services you require.

There is no cost for community nursing services or community rehabilitation services if you are receiving care at home. Some medications and palliative supplies and equipment are available free of charge for eligible patients through B.C. Palliative Care Benefits. In addition, there is no cost for home support services if you are enrolled with B.C. Palliative Care Benefits. For more information, please see the “**B.C. Palliative Care Benefits**” section, below.

If you require publicly subsidized hospice care, you will pay a fixed daily rate of \$43.98 per day. For more information on costs or eligibility for short-stay services (which includes hospice care), please see:

- [Short-Stay Services](#)

If payment of the fixed daily rate would cause you or your family serious financial hardship, or mean that you (or your spouse, if applicable) would be unable to maintain the family home or unit, you may be eligible for a reduced rate.

For more information on eligibility and how to apply for a temporary reduction of the daily rate, please see:

- [Temporary Reduction of Your Client Rate](#)

For more general information on the costs of publicly subsidized home and community care services in B.C., please see:

- [Who Pays for Care?](#)

End-of-Life Care and Palliative Services in Long-Term Care Homes

Supportive and compassionate care can be provided to people who are nearing the end of their lives who are receiving long-term care services.

When first admitted to a long-term care home, a person's immediate needs are assessed, and a transitional care plan is made. Usually within six weeks of admission, the care is reviewed with the person's family as the person settles in the new environment.

End-of-life and palliative care services available to clients receiving long-term care services include:

- Pain and symptom assessment and management
- Psychological care
- Loss and grief support for family caregivers
- Access to specialized prescription medication, supplies and equipment.

These services are also available to clients receiving short-stay services.

For more information on long-term care services and benefits provided, please see:

- [Long-term Care Services](#)

B.C. Palliative Care Benefits

B.C. Palliative Care Benefits supports B.C. residents of any age who have reached the end stage of a life-threatening illness and want to receive medically-appropriate palliative care at home. 'Home' is wherever the person is living, whether in their own home, with family or friends,

in an assisted living residence or in a hospice that is not a licensed community care facility covered under PharmaCare Plan B.

The intent of B.C. Palliative Care Benefits is to allow patients to receive palliative care at home rather than be admitted to hospital. The benefits give palliative patients access to the same drug benefits they would receive in hospital, and access to some medical supplies and equipment from their health authority.

The benefits include full coverage of approved medications, equipment and supplies (upon referral to and assessment by the local health authority).

For more information on B.C. Palliative Care Benefits, including eligibility requirements, a patient information sheet and list of approved medications, go to:

- [BC Palliative Care Benefits](#)

Advance Care Planning

Advance care planning involves you, as a capable adult, thinking and talking about your beliefs and values, and writing down your wishes or instructions regarding future health care treatment in the event you become incapable of speaking for yourself or making your own decisions. Advance care planning enables those who know you best to speak up for you and respect your wishes if asked to make a decision on your behalf.

For more information about advance care planning, go to:

- [Advance Care Planning](#)

ALBERTA

Palliative care health benefits

Overview

The Palliative Coverage Program provides subsidized benefits to Albertans who are:

- diagnosed as palliative
- remain in their home or in a hospice where access to publicly funded drugs, diabetes supplies and ambulance services may not be included

Palliative refers to patients who:

- have been diagnosed by a physician or nurse practitioner as being in the end stage of a terminal illness or disease
- are aware of their diagnosis
- have made a voluntary informed decision related to resuscitation, and the focus of care is palliation and not treatment aimed at a cure

Albertans who are palliative have access to extra health benefits that cover health-related services not covered by the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan (AHCIP).

By subsidizing the cost of care in the home or community, a major financial burden is removed for the patient and the family.

Alberta Blue Cross administers Palliative Coverage. There are no premiums to pay.

Eligibility

The program is open to Albertans registered with the AHCIP and who have been diagnosed as being palliative.

The program excludes patients who live in residences that provide publicly funded drugs, diabetes supplies and ambulance services. These residences include:

- type A continuing care homes (formerly known as long-term care facilities)
- acute care hospitals
- psychiatric hospitals

Apply for the program

Step 1. Complete the form

Download and complete the [Palliative Coverage Program application form](#).

You can also get the application form from:

- Alberta Blue Cross
- your physician or nurse practitioner
- the palliative care program
- home care offices in your area

The application form must be completed and signed by both the patient, or guardian, and physician or nurse practitioner.

Step 2. Submit the form

You can mail or fax the form.

Mail:

Alberta Health
Attn: Alberta Palliative Coverage Program
PO Box 1360 Station Main
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2N3

Fax: 780-422-0102

The patient or guardian will receive written notification from the Ministry of Health regarding acceptance into the program. Alberta Blue Cross will mail an ID card to the patient or guardian.

When coverage begins

The physician or nurse practitioner determines the effective date of coverage. This date must not be more than 30 days prior to the date the program office receives the application. The coverage will continue as long as the patient is diagnosed as being palliative.

SASKATCHEWAN

Services

Palliative care is provided through home care, long-term care, and acute care services. In districts without designated hospital beds, places in special care homes can be used for end-stage palliative care without the usual user charges. Urban centres like Saskatoon and Regina have large palliative care programs with interdisciplinary teams and 24-hour response teams.

There is strong support for palliative services at home, and these have increased significantly as financial barriers have been reduced or removed. Thus, the provincial drug plan provides drugs without charge to people designated as palliative by physicians or by case management assessments. In addition, the required dietary supplements and all required basic supplies, such as medical dressings, are now available at home or in special care homes, just as in hospitals.

Palliative Care Programs

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/health/accessing-health-care-services/palliative-care-programs>

Seniors Income Plan (SIP)

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/family-and-social-support/seniors-services/financial-help-for-seniors>

ONTARIO

Places Where Palliative Care is Delivered

Palliative care is delivered in a variety of care settings, including the following:

Home

- Provided by home care agencies, visiting hospice care programs or family caregivers.
- Includes nursing care, supporting activities of daily living, social work, case management, and providing medical supplies and equipment as needed.
- Find information about home-based services in your area at healthcareathome.ca *Opens in a new window*.

Hospital

- Provide more intensive care, and medical treatments to help address complex needs.
- If a person has pain or other symptoms, or they experience a serious change in their health, they may need to visit an emergency department. Some may return home after receiving care, while others may be admitted to the hospital.
- Hospitals may have designated inpatient palliative care units or beds, or they may deliver palliative care in other inpatient units.
- Many hospitals have palliative care consultation teams for patients, as well as other patient and caregiver programs and supports.

Hospice

- A community-based organization (or program) that supports people living with a progressive, life-limiting illness and their caregivers, family members and friends.
- Provides support in a variety of settings, including a person's home or a homelike setting.
- Offers services such as hospice-trained volunteers, day programs, psychosocial supports, grief and bereavement support, spiritual care, caregiver support, wellness programs, complementary therapies, children's programs, outreach or shared-care teams, and end-of-life care within a hospice residence.

Hospice Residence

- A health care facility and registered charity that offers palliative care services by an inter-professional team with palliative care expertise.
- Care is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in a home-like setting for the individual and their significant others.

Long-Term Care Home

- Places where adults can live and get help with most of their daily activities (e.g., eating, bathing)
- Provides access to 24-hour nursing care including palliative care.
- Best suited for people with significant health challenges.
- Offers palliative care to residents unless they need to be admitted to hospital due to medical complications.
- To learn more about long-term care homes and eligibility criteria, visit the [long-term care overview Opens in a new window](#) on the Ontario website.

Palliative care may also be provided in other places where people live together, such as retirement homes.

Cost of Palliative Care in Ontario

Palliative care is completely publicly funded in Ontario. This means that as long as you [qualify for OHIP](#) and qualify to be admitted into a hospital, a hospice, or a long-term care home, you won't need to pay for palliative care services provided in these settings. Home palliative care is

also publicly funded by the LHINs. If you would like to receive palliative care at home, contact your Local Health Integration Network and the LHIN will first determine if you qualify for public funding; if you do, they will then assign the specific type of care and the amount of care you need to your care plan.

If you or your loved ones don't qualify for OHIP nor home care, or would like to receive additional support services such as home support or nursing in addition to the current palliative care plan, you can consider private home care services provided by home care agencies. If you pay privately, the costs of the services will differ depending on the type of services you would like to receive. For example, personal support costs around \$28 to \$35 per hour, while the hourly cost for nursing could be from \$45 to \$80 depending on whether you want to receive care from a [Registered Practical Nurse \(RPN\)](#) or [Registered Nurse \(RN\)](#).

Once you've decided you want private home care added to your plan, you can contact a home care agency and let one of the care representatives know the type of service and number of hours that you are looking for.

Additional Resources for Palliative Care in Ontario

If you're a caregiver and you're supporting a family member receiving palliative care, here's a list of useful resources:

- **Making Decisions About Your Care**

This quick [two pager](#) from the [Ontario Palliative Care Network](#) provides a guide for clients and families on Advance Care Planning, Goals of Care, and Treatment Decisions & Informed Consent.

- **New Revised HCC ACP Workbook**

The workbook is provided by [Speak Up Ontario](#), a partnership between [Hospice Palliative Care Ontario \(HPCO\)](#) and the [Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association \(CHPCA\)](#). The 2018 version of the [Ontario workbook](#) is intended for anyone, regardless of age, that is ready to start advance care planning conversations.

QUEBEC

How to access palliative care?

Palliative care can be obtained through any member of your health care team or by direct contact with a palliative care provider. Palliative care is offered in a wide variety of settings, including hospitals, nursing homes and free standing hospice facilities. Once your doctor/health care team determines that palliative care is appropriate for you, they will initiate the referral to the facility that best meets your needs

A useful website for those in Quebec is the [Réseau des soins palliatifs du Québec](#) and in Montreal the [Santé Montréal](#) website as well as the [Palliative Care McGill website](#).

If I wish to receive palliative care at home, how do I go about this?

Once your health care team determines that you are able to receive palliative care in your home, you will be given a list of resources to help with this. The list will include organizations that will help organize your home and provide the appropriate equipment and personnel to facilitate home care, including special palliative care trained volunteers.

Where can I get practical support such as financial aid or legal counsel?

Speak to your health care provider to determine which medical expenses are covered by provincial health insurance or private health insurance plans and which costs you may have to pay for directly. In some communities, there may be charitable organizations that can provide financial assistance.

The best person to provide legal advice is a lawyer or notary. End of life planning may include a will, power of attorney, advance directives, "do not resuscitate" (also known as DNR) orders and more. You may also wish to discuss legal issues with your health care team and your loved ones.

NEW BRUNSWICK

About

Do you have a life-limiting illness and need help managing it? Are you a caregiver or family member of someone who has needs related to a life-limiting illness?

If this describes you or someone you know, palliative care may be able to provide the support you need. A common misconception about this type of care is that it's just for people who are dying. This is not the case. Palliative care can be provided at different stages of a disease's progression: from diagnosis of a life-limiting illness up until the end of life and at every stage in between.

Palliative care uses a team approach that includes nurses, doctors, pharmacists, social workers, psychologists, spiritual counsellors/chaplains, volunteers and other professionals who work together to improve the quality of life for the patient and their family. The members of the team and services are determined by the patient's needs and goals.

Palliative care can include symptom and pain management, and other ways to relieve suffering, whether it's mental or spiritual. It offers a support system to provide patients comfort and dignity, and the best quality of life for them and their family, including bereavement care of significant others.

Many people can benefit from palliative care, from children to older adults who have been diagnosed with a life-limiting illness or informed by a medical professional that death can be expected.

Palliative care can be provided in different settings in New Brunswick, including at a:

1. clinic or doctor's office,
2. patient's home,
3. nursing home,
4. adult residential facility such as a special care home,
5. hospital, and
6. home-like setting called a hospice that specializes in end-of-life care. There are three in New Brunswick: one in Saint John, [Bobby's Hospice](#), one in Fredericton, [Hospice House](#) and one in Moncton, [Albert House](#). There is one more in development for Miramichi.

Hospice services can support palliative care in any type of setting. It can include volunteer programs and supportive care in the community. Hospice care may also be provided in a community facility or in a hospital when appropriate.

Palliative care can help with:

- managing pain and other symptoms related to the illness or treatments,
- providing social, psychological, emotional and spiritual support,
- supporting a patient to live as actively and fully as possible,
- supporting a caregiver (including advice on providing care from medical and other health care providers),
- allowing for a more peaceful and dignified death, and
- supporting a patient's family before and after their death.

Who qualifies?

You qualify for palliative care if you:

- have been diagnosed with a life-limiting illness and are looking for relief from your physical symptoms, pain or have other social/spiritual needs related to your disease,
- are a resident of New Brunswick, and
- you have a valid New Brunswick Medicare card or in the process of getting one.

How do I access palliative care?

There are different ways to receive palliative care, depending on whether you have needs associated with managing your life-limiting illness or are nearing the end of your life. There are also different requirements to access palliative care in different settings.

Some options for accessing palliative care include:

1. **Primary care providers:** Speak with your family physician or nurse practitioner about accessing palliative care to address unmet needs.
2. **New Brunswick Extra-Mural Program (EMP):** This provincial home health care program provides palliative and end-of-life care to help individuals remain at home if

hospital level care is not required. If you want to stay at home, a clinical assessment can be requested by you, your family or someone acting on your behalf with your consent. To request the services, you can speak to your primary care provider or call the Extra-Mural Program Care Coordination Centre toll-free number at 1-844-982-7367. The referral form can be found [here](#). Forms can be printed and faxed to 506-872-6601 or e-mailed to EMPCC@Medavienb.ca. Click [here](#) for more information.

3. **Hospitals:** All hospitals offer palliative care, including end-of-life care. Some have designated palliative teams and/or palliative care units. Contact your doctor about accessing palliative care in a hospital. Click [here](#) for a list of Horizon Health Network hospitals. Click [here](#) for a list of Vitalité Health Network hospitals.
4. **Community-based end-of-life hospice services:** Click [here](#) to access a list of hospice organizations and their services, including bereavement care, available in your region.
5. **Hospice facility services:** Services vary depending on where you live in the province. Click [here](#) for [Bobby's Hospice](#) in Saint John, click [here](#) for [Hospice House](#) in Fredericton and click [here](#) for [Albert House](#) in Moncton.
6. **Nursing homes:** Palliative care can be provided to residents in a nursing home. To live in a nursing home, you must meet the requirements of either the Long Term Care Program or the Disability Support Program. Click [here](#) for more information about how to qualify for the Long Term Care Program. Click [here](#) for details about the Disability Support Program.
7. **Adult residential facilities:** Palliative care can be provided to residents in these settings. You must meet the eligibility criteria of the Disability Support Program (click [here](#) for details) or Long Term Care Program (click [here](#) for more information) to qualify. Palliative care can be supported by the New Brunswick Extra-Mural Program in this setting (click [here](#) for more information.)

FAQs

How can I find out about palliative care in my community?

You can reach out to one or more of the following:

- the [New Brunswick Hospice Palliative Care Association](#) (email info@nbhpca-aspnb.ca or click [here](#) for more information),
- your family doctor or nurse practitioner,
- your Extra-Mural Program service providers (nurse, licensed practical nurse, respiratory therapist, dietician, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, social worker and speech language pathologist),
- your social worker,
- your spiritual counsellor, and
- organizations that advocate and support caregivers and patients with illnesses such as the Canadian Cancer Society, the Heart and Stroke Foundation, the Alzheimer Society, the Kidney Foundation, the Canadian AIDS Society or others as appropriate.

NOVA SCOTIA

Palliative Care in Nova Scotia

Although currently no standardized palliative program covers the entire province, you and the person diagnosed with a life limiting illness have the right to request a palliative approach to

their healthcare and end-of-life care. Services vary, and location in the province will determine the level of [Palliative Home Care](#) available from Continuing Care. The Nova Scotia Health Authority has information on [Palliative Care Services](#) that residents of Nova Scotia may expect to receive, where to access this important service, and contact information.

Hospice Halifax is a 10-bed hospice residence that opened to the public in 2019. It is currently the only such facility in Nova Scotia, and it accepts patients from all across the province. There is no fee for services, and you can apply directly from their [website](#).

Palliative Home Care

Palliative home care is compassionate care provided to an individual within a person's home setting with a focus on symptom management and enhances the quality of life of people with a life-limiting illness.

Palliative Home Care Services include:

- nursing (like dressing changes, catheter care, intravenous therapy and palliative care)
- home support (like personal care, respite and housekeeping)
- Palliative Home Care Medication Coverage Program

Palliative home care services are organized by a care coordinator. The care coordinator will assess services that are needed and discuss any fees that would be incurred. Fees are only incurred with home support and would be waived closer to end of life. There is no direct cost to you for nursing services.

How much does Palliative Home Care cost?

The fee for home support services are based on your income therefore you may or may not be required to pay a fee for service. Nursing services are free. A Care Coordinator will advise you about any fees you may have to pay.

How do I access this service?

Call 1-800-225-7225 a Care Coordinator will set up an in home visit to complete a care assessment. If you already have a Care Coordinator, speak with him/her about this service.

What do hospice societies and palliative care societies do?

There are several hospice societies and palliative care societies throughout the province with varying mandates. Some exist to raise funds to build a hospice residence in their community. Others focus on palliative care support in patients' homes or at hospitals provided by social workers or volunteers. Please contact your local hospital for contact information for the closest society to your location. [Hospice Societies in Nova Scotia](#).

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Palliative Care Program

If you have a progressive life limiting illness, the **Provincial Integrated Palliative Care Program** may be able to help you and your family through this difficult time. You can access palliative care services through a PEI [Home Care office](#) near your community.

How can palliative care help me?

Palliative care is provided by a team, not one single individual. The team includes physicians, nurses, social workers, volunteers as well as other professionals that can support you and your family. Any member of the team can play a more significant role in the care of one family. That team member may remain the same over years or may change as your needs evolve.

- understanding your illness and treatment options,
- expressing your wishes and personal goals, and helping you to achieve these goals,



- pain and symptom management,
- limited respite care,
- emotional and spiritual support,
- [advance care planning](#), and
- ongoing bereavement support.

How will I know when I need palliative care?

The real question that one should ask themselves is *“Do I have any unmet palliative care needs?”*.

You may have unmet palliative care needs if:

- you are experiencing the following symptoms:
 - o pain
 - o fatigue
 - o nausea
 - o lack of appetite
 - o shortness of breath
 - o depression
 - o anxiety

- your illness is resulting in frequent trips to emergency or admissions to hospital; or
- the goals of your care have changed.

Will I have to leave home to receive palliative care service?

No.

Trained, qualified palliative care teams provide comfort and support in the setting most appropriate to your needs –in long-term care, community care or palliative care facility, as well as in a hospital setting.

What is the Paramedics Providing Palliative Care at Home Program?

Should a patient with palliative care needs experience an unexpected event while at home **after hours***, in-home support is available through Island EMS. By calling 9-1-1, trained paramedics will help provide care and support to you or your loved one at home. Island EMS paramedics are trained in palliative pain and symptom management. There is **no fee** for this in-home service to patients registered in the Provincial Integrated Palliative Care Program who have a valid [PEI Health Card](#). Fees may apply in the event of transport or for non-urgent ambulance services. Learn more about the [Paramedics Providing Palliative Care at Home Program](#). For further information, visit [www.islandems.ca\(link is external\)](http://www.islandems.ca(link is external))

****After hours** is the time when your Home Care Nurse is not regularly available. Please consult with your Home Care Nursing team.*

How do I contact someone about palliative care?

You can contact your family doctor, [Home Care](#) in your community, or the Provincial Palliative Care Office:

Home Care Offices

Souris

Souris Hospital
17 Knights Avenue
PO Box 640
Souris, PE C0A 2B0

Telephone: (902) 687-7096

Montague

6 Harmony Lane
PO Box 490
Montague, PE C0A 1R0

Telephone: (902) 838-0786

Charlottetown

165 John Yeo Drive

Suite 201
Charlottetown, PE C1E 3J3

Telephone: (902) 368-4790

Summerside

Wedgewood Manor
310 Brophy Avenue
Summerside, PE C1N 5N4

Telephone: (902) 888-8440

O'Leary

Community Hospital
14 MacKinnon Drive
PO Box 160
O'Leary, PE C0B 1V0

Telephone: (902) 859-8730

Provincial Palliative Care Centre

93 Murchison Lane
Charlottetown, PE C1A 0G3

Telephone: (902) 368-4781

Email: [palliativeadmin@ihis.or\(link sends e-mail\)](mailto:palliativeadmin@ihis.or(link sends e-mail))

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

Palliative Care Resource Guide

<https://cancercare.easternhealth.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/03/Palliative-Care-Resource-Guide-March-2022.pdf>

Advance Care Planning: It's Your Decision

https://www.centralhealth.nl.ca/files/ugd/d55165_dc35c53e24544a218352e0935ced2c73.pdf

Advance Care Directive – Eastern Health

<https://www.easternhealth.ca/prc/advance-care-directive/>

YUKON

Information on palliative care

<https://yukon.ca/en/palliative-care>

NUNAVUT

Nunavut Support Directory

<https://www.dyingwithdignity.ca/education-resources/nunavut-support-directory/>

Hospice Palliative Care of Nunavut

https://www.virtualhospice.ca/en_US/Main+Site+Navigation/Home/Support/Resources/Programs+and+Services/Provincial/Nunavut/Palliative+care+association/Hospice+Palliative+Care+of+Nunavut.aspx

