

# special-care homes

planning for long-term care



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## YOUR RIGHTS IN A SPECIAL-CARE HOME

**You have the right to** decide how you want to live and to accept or refuse support, assistance or protection as long as you are not harming yourself or others and have the capacity to make these decisions.

**You have the right to** receive the most effective form of support, assistance or protection in the least restrictive or intrusive manner when you are unable to care for yourself.

**You have the right to** be informed about decisions affecting you and, to the best of your ability, participate in making those decisions.

**You have the right to** be treated with dignity and respect and to be free from harassment, neglect, and physical, emotional or financial abuse.

**You have the right to** receive safe and adequate care. This means that you should receive considerate care in a pleasant environment and have your special needs looked after. Your care should include good personal hygiene and healthy nutritional practices.

**You have the right to** receive medical attention as required. A physician must be on call at all times. In the case of serious illness or accident, your family must be notified.

**You have the right to** have your personal health information treated in a private and confidential manner that is respectful of your best interests.

**You have the right to** privacy insofar as is possible. Part of being treated with respect includes respecting your privacy generally and particularly when receiving medical attention or personal care.

**You have the right to** participate, or not participate, in individual or group activities such as physical and recreational programs.

**You have the right to** attend, or not attend, religious or spiritual services inside or outside of the home.

**You have the right to** leave the home to visit, shop or take part in other social activities unless there is a good reason for refusing such permission.

## Introduction

In Saskatchewan, there are numerous Special-care Homes that provide care for people who cannot fully care for themselves and require prolonged care. In this publication, the term "Special-care Home" refers to a nursing home or other facility designed and licensed to provide supervisory, personal or nursing care under the authority of the province's Regional Health Authorities (RHA's). This publication is aimed at older adults who are considering a move to a Special-care Home, as well as interested family members.



Special-care Homes generally provide three types of care...

- **Permanent Admission**, where a person's needs can no longer be met in the community. Coordinated assessment units work with Special-care Homes within their Regional Health Authority to ensure appropriate accommodation for those with the greatest need. Costs to the resident are provincially determined and vary depending on the resident's annual income. Residents are also responsible for the costs of their medications and some personal supplies.
- **Planned Respite Care**, to provide relief for a caregiver or a period of convalescence for the client. Bookings must be made in advance of requested dates and are dependent on availability of designated beds. Clients are charged a standard fee and are also responsible for the costs of their medications and some personal supplies.

- **Emergency Respite Care**, to provide short-term respite where there is a sudden and unexpected change in the client's support system and the client requires 24-hour supervision. Clients are charged a provincially determined fee, and are responsible for the cost of transportation to and from the facility, as well as all costs for medications and some personal supplies.

This publication is mainly concerned with permanent admission for care, but provides some general information that may be helpful in other situations.

## Other Programs and Services to Support Seniors Living at Home

Before we talk about permanent admissions to a Special-care Home, it is important to note that there are a variety of programs and services designed to enable older adults to continue to live in their own homes with some outside support. Day programs can provide things such as rehabilitation services, social opportunities and out-of-home respite to caregivers. Home Care offers services such as nursing care, physiotherapy, personal care, meal preparation/Meals on Wheels and in-home respite for caregivers. Volunteers can provide delivery of Meals on Wheels, transportation to appointments, assistance with errands and social visits.

Most of these services can be obtained through your Regional Health Authority. An assessment coordinator will examine each case individually to determine needs and coordinate available services. In the case of Home Care, there is no cost for assessment and case co-ordination, nursing or therapy services. Provincially established rates for other services such as in-home respite, meals and home

management are based on income and the number of services received.

In addition to services and programs provided through Saskatchewan Health and other government departments, there are a number of community-based groups, volunteers and private businesses that may offer many of the same services. Some groups may be not-for-profit organizations, while others may be for-profit businesses.

Your Regional Health Authority can arrange for an assessment to identify your needs and determine where those needs can best be met.

## Other Housing Options

Similarly, there are a number of other housing options, such as retirement communities (assisted living), low-income housing programs and personal care homes that provide a variety of living arrangements with a range of services and programs. Some private businesses, such as personal care homes, must be licensed, while others may not have that requirement. In the case of private businesses, rates are not regulated - they are determined between the operator and client.

## A Word About Guardians and Co-Decision Makers

Older adults are entitled to choose how they live and can accept or refuse help and protection, provided that they do not harm themselves or others, and have the capacity to make decisions. Older adults are *presumed* to have capacity to make decisions about where and how they live, unless the contrary can be shown. For example, there are times when

people cannot manage their affairs due to the effects of mental or physical illnesses such as Alzheimer's disease, stroke or other disabling illnesses.

When older adults are unable to care for themselves, they are entitled to receive support or protection in a manner that is the least restrictive and intrusive. They are still entitled to be informed about decisions affecting them and, to the best of their ability, to continue to participate in such decisions. Family members or other individuals that have a sufficient interest can apply for a court order allowing them to make decisions for someone who is unable to make reasonable decisions for themselves.

If you are competent to make decisions, you can decide whether a Special-care Home is right for you. The following information can help you understand the process and issues involved. If you are a relative or friend that has been authorized to make decisions for someone else, the following information applies to you as well.

## Special-care Homes

Special-care Homes are designed for individuals whose needs can no longer be met in the community. Admission is on the basis of assessed need. Special-care Homes continue to try to maintain the highest level of independence possible for their residents.

Moving to a Special-care Home is a personal choice. If you are competent to make decisions for yourself and meet the criteria for long-term care, you can decide whether a Special-care



Home is right for you. No one can force a competent person to move to a Special-care Home against their will.

If you are considering a move to a Special-care Home, you must meet with an assessment coordinator. Assessment coordinators look at your long term health and social needs and determine where or how these needs can be met. Assessments examine what you can do for yourself, what you need assistance with and what other support is available to you.

If your needs can no longer be met in the community, yet you do not require acute care, a Special-care Home may be able to provide the help you need. Discovering the features and services of a Special-care Home and how they match with your individual needs will help you decide what is right for you and your family.

## Assessments

Assessments provide valuable information about the level of care you require. Many Regional Health Authorities have a coordinated assessment unit or single point of entry that can match your needs with services that can meet those needs. An assessment will examine several factors, such as your...

- physical health
- mental status
- informal support systems
- social relationships
- emotional state
- spiritual needs

Assessments can be arranged through your Regional Health Authority. If you have been hospitalized and will be unable to return home to care for yourself once you have been discharged, your Regional Health Authority's assessment

team will work together with the hospital's discharge staff to determine your needs.

The assessment process is the key to helping you evaluate your own situation, placing the needs you have identified in the context of your overall living situation. You can then determine the type of care and service best able to meet your needs within the context of the available resources.

The Saskatchewan Client Information Profile (SCIP) assessment tool, or another tool approved by Saskatchewan Health, is used to assess individuals residing in a community setting who are requesting or requiring supportive care services. The assessment tool is used to identify your needs along with the needs and strengths of your support system. Your care options are then examined, with priority given to supporting you in the community for as long as possible. However, the assessment process may identify a need for



placement when you can no longer have your care needs met appropriately in the community.

Special-care Homes must ensure that they are adequately equipped to care for any resident admitted to their facility, considering the staff and facilities of the home and the needs of the resident. Assessments help ensure that the needs of persons admitted match the level of care available in a particular Special-care Home.

## Levels of Care and Nursing Care Requirements

### Levels of Care

**Supervisory Care** provides guidance or supervision of a resident's daily living.

**Limited Personal Care** provides ambulatory residents with assistance with such things as personal hygiene, dressing and grooming.

**Intensive Personal Care** provides non-ambulatory residents assistance with things such as personal hygiene, dressing and grooming.

**Limited Nursing Care** goes beyond personal care services to include such things as bathing, feeding and administering medications and minor treatments.

**Long-term Care** provides prolonged nursing and personal care. Patient care is under continuing medical supervision and nursing care is under continuing nursing supervision.

**Respite Care** provides temporary care to individuals not normally resident in the Special-care Home, up to 60 consecutive days.



### **Nursing Care Requirements**

**Supervisory care accommodation:** Care is by or under supervision of an operator who has practical nursing experience. There must be enough staff to provide at least 20 minutes direct supervisory care daily to each resident.

**Limited personal care accommodation:** Care is by or under the direction of an operator who has practical nursing experience. There must be enough staff to provide at least 45 minutes personal care daily to each resident.

**Intensive personal or Nursing care accommodation:** Care is provided under the direction of a Registered Nurse or Registered Psychiatric Nurse and your physician. Nursing staff must be provided on a 24-hour basis. There must be enough staff to provide at least 2 hours of personal or nursing care daily to each resident.

## **Wait Lists**

Once your care needs have been determined, the next step is to determine which facilities have accommodation available for that level of care. Special-care Homes strive to place residents with other residents who are in a similar state of health and aging. When and if a resident's needs are greater than the level of care available in the home, arrangements for a transfer to a more appropriate facility must be made.

You may want to consider the range of levels and number of residents that can be accommodated within a particular setting, and find out about the facility's ability to respond to changing needs. For example, not all facilities provide secure

units for persons suffering from dementia or palliative care units for persons in the late stages of a terminal illness. This is a good time for caregivers to also think about their own needs in relation to what each Special-care Home has to offer.

Regional Health Authorities generally have a rating system to ensure that available beds go to individuals with the highest need and living at the greatest risk. If you are considering a Special-care Home that is outside of your Regional Health Authority, there will be additional criteria that must be met. Your application for a Special-care Home will be reviewed to determine whether you meet the eligibility criteria for the Special-care Home's wait list. If eligibility criteria are met, your name will be placed on a priority wait list.

While you are on a wait list, your care needs will be reviewed regularly to ensure that you continue to meet the eligibility requirements. It is important to let the Client Care Coordinator know of any significant changes that could affect admission to a Special-care Home. You will be offered support, such as home care, while awaiting placement.

It is always difficult to estimate how long the wait will be for Special-care Home accommodation. You will be contacted as soon as accommodation is available. Notice is short - you are expected to move within a matter of days. You will also be expected to accept the first offer of accommodation, but will have the opportunity to possibly transfer to the facility of your choice at a later date. With this in mind, you may want to learn about different facilities.

# Facilities

## Accommodations

Although several Special-care Homes may be able to provide the level of care you require, the facilities themselves may vary widely. The type of accommodations available may vary. Some may provide private or semi-private rooms. You should find out about included amenities and special equipment. Because of space limitations and other regulations, there may be restrictions on what personal belongings you can bring into the home. Policies regarding decorating or personalizing your room may also vary. Common areas and grounds will vary, as will access to them. Ask about visiting hours. Compare facilities and policies.

## Activities

Special-care Homes may provide a variety of physical and recreational activities suited to the needs and interests of the residents. Unless a doctor orders otherwise, residents should have free access to recreational areas. Ask about what activities are offered and where and when they take place.



## Spiritual Care

Special-care Homes cooperate with the clergy in the community to meet the spiritual needs of the residents. Services offered may vary depending on the size of the home and available facilities. You may want to learn about the

particular spiritual services that are available in the different Special-care Homes. Attendance to spiritual care services is voluntary.

## Outings

Unless there is a good reason to refuse permission, you should be allowed to leave the home to visit, shop or socialize. You may want to explore the neighbourhood and find out what it has to offer. You might also consider proximity to friends and family. You may wish to discuss circumstances where permission to leave the home may be restricted.



## Meals

All Special-care Homes are to provide meals that meet the standards set out in Canada's Food Guide. Special diets can be provided on doctor's orders. Menus are posted in advance and available for viewing. You are generally encouraged to take your meals in a dining room along with the other residents. Assistance is available if you need it. Ask for details about meal routines and explore the common areas where dining generally takes place.

## Financial Considerations

You are responsible for covering a portion of the cost of living in a Special-care Home. Generally, monthly fees are provincially determined and adjusted quarterly to reflect

changes in Old Age Security (OAS), Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) and Saskatchewan Income Plan (SIP) payments.

The amount you pay will vary depending on your annual income. Resident changes are based on income levels only, including interest received from investments and bank accounts. Personal assets (land, houses, bank account) are not taken into account in determining the resident change. You will be asked to provide a copy of your previous years' Income Tax return. In the case of married couples where only one spouse requires long term care, the couple can choose to base the fee calculation on half of their combined income or solely on the income of the spouse requiring care.

The Government of Saskatchewan currently covers almost 70% of the cost of long term care. The fee schedule guarantees that all residents have a minimum level of disposable income after the cost of long term care. There is, however, both a minimum and a maximum resident charge.

Fees charged cover your portion of care and accommodation. There may, however, be additional charges for some services or special equipment. Be sure to ask about what is included in the fee and when you can expect to pay any additional charges. Ask about payment options and find out whether the monthly fee is pro-rated in the event you move in or out mid-month.

Financial assistance may be available through the Veterans Affairs Canada, private medical plans and certain insurance plans.

### **A Word For Couples About OAS and GIS Payments**

When only you or your spouse moves to a Special-care Home, Social Development Canada (SDC) can treat each spouse as a single pensioner. It may be beneficial to have

your Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement payments re-calculated. For more information, you can contact the federal Income Security Call Centre toll-free at 1-800-277-9914.

### **Dealing with Personal and Real Property**

If you are considering a move to a Special-care Home, you may have questions about dealing with personal possessions that you will not be taking with you. If you own real property, you may also have concerns about how to best deal with it. As discussed earlier, the value of your assets, both personal possessions and real property, such as a house, does not affect the fee you will be charged in the Special-care Home. This fee is based only on your annual income plus any earned interest.

If you decide to sell some of your assets, the money received from the sale will not directly affect your portion of the fee for Special-care Home accommodation. If, however, you invest the income, any interest received would increase your monthly income and therefore affect your fee.

If you haven't already done so, it may be a good time to consult with a financial advisor or estate planner, as well as family members, to determine how these matters can best be managed.

## **Permanent Admissions**

When accommodation becomes available, the Special-care Home will need some basic personal information about you. Information such as your name, former address, age, sex, marital status, religion and contact information for your family doctor is recorded on your record of admission. This form will also record the name and address of your next of kin or other responsible party if you have no next of kin.

Information about your medical condition at the time of admission is also recorded. Most of this information will have been gathered through your assessment process.

When you move to a Special-care Home, you may have some valuables you want kept safe. Generally, Special-care Homes prefer not to accept items for safekeeping. Any cash you turn over to the home for safekeeping is deposited in a trust account for you. The trust account must be at a bank and proper records must be maintained. You should receive receipts for all deposits made. Clear and accurate records must also be maintained for any other valuables turned over for safekeeping. Ask about how you can safely keep some cash on hand for incidental expenses.

For your convenience, you may want someone else to handle some or all of your financial affairs. A *power of attorney* is a legal document that allows you to give someone else the power and authority to act on your behalf. You may continue to act on your own behalf and have control over your affairs, but the person named in the power of attorney will also be able to deal with your affairs.

No board member or any person employed in a Special-care Home may have a power of attorney or property guardianship for any resident who is not related by blood or marriage to the board member or employee.

## Medical Care

You must designate a medical doctor who can provide medical care and treatment as needed in the Special-care Home. After your initial medical examination at the time of your admission, you will also need to undergo annual medical examinations. You will, of course, receive medical attention as required between routine examinations. The

home must ensure that a physician is on call for emergency care at all times. In the case of serious illness or accident, next of kin have the right to be notified immediately.

Medications and treatments are not to be given without a written order from a doctor or primary care nurse. For your own safety, the home must ensure that medications are clearly labelled and stored in locked cabinets.



## A Word About Health Care Directives

A health care directive is a document that allows you to tell health care providers the type of treatment you would like to receive if you lose your capacity to make or communicate health care decisions. It is prepared in advance and takes effect when you are no longer capable of consenting to or refusing treatment directly. You can revoke a health care directive at any time while you are capable of making health care decisions.

You can give specific directions about your care, or name a proxy to make decisions when you become incapable. You may also choose to leave specific instructions for some situations and name a proxy for others.

Before making a directive, you may want to discuss treatment options and other issues with your doctor or other health care providers, family members and anyone you wish to name as proxy.

Making a health care directive helps to ensure that your health care decisions will be followed. It can also clarify your wishes for your health care providers and family. The choice

to make a health care directive is yours. If you do not have a directive and become incapable of making health care decisions, your nearest relative can make decisions for you. If there are no family members or they cannot be found, your doctor or health care provider will make health care decisions for you.

## For Further Information

General information about Special-care Homes, assessments and admissions is available through your Regional Health Authority. For your convenience, contact information is included on the following pages.

For specific information about Special-care Homes in your area, check the yellow pages of your telephone directory under "Special-care Homes" or "Nursing Homes". Call and ask about arranging a visit or guided tour.

PLEA also produces a number of other publications that may be of interest to older adults, including...

*Older Adults and The Law* (booklet)

*Abuse of Older Adults* (booklet)

*Patient's Rights* (booklet)

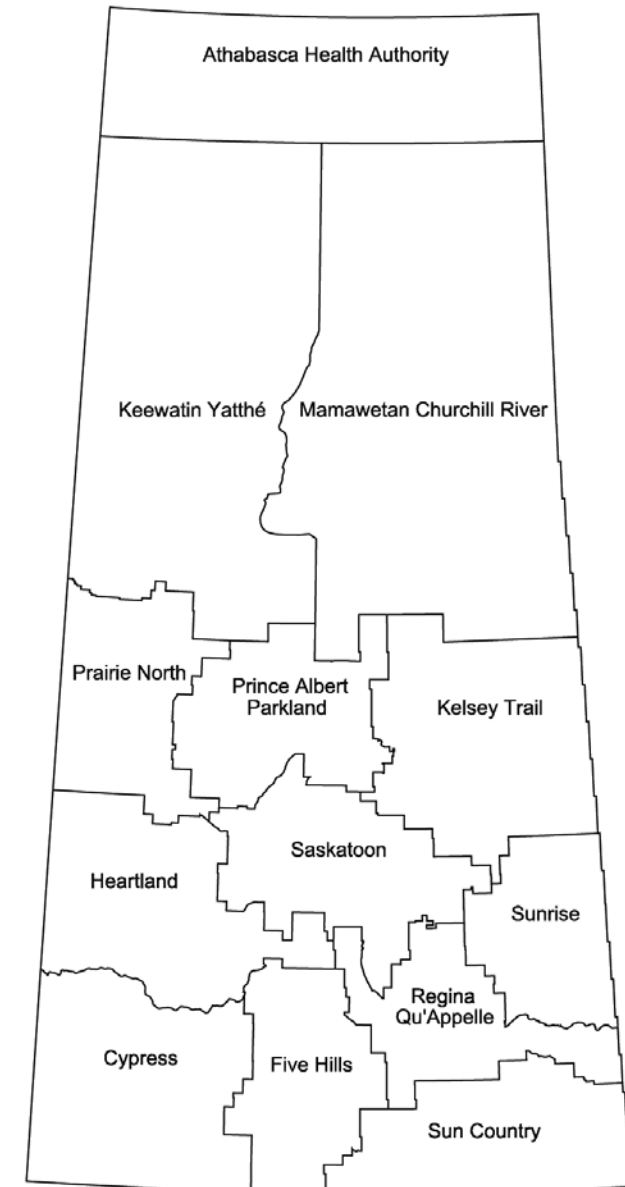
*Wills and Estates* (booklet)

*Power of Attorney* (booklet)

*Health Care Directives* (pamphlet)

The publications are free of charge and can be obtained by contacting our office or visiting our website at [www.plea.org](http://www.plea.org).

## Saskatchewan Regional Health Authorities



## **Saskatchewan Regional Health Authorities Directory**

Athabasca .....	(306) 439-2200
Cypress .....	(306) 778-5100
Five Hills .....	(306) 694-0296
.....	or 1-888-425-1111
Heartland.....	(306) 882-4111
Keewatin Yatthé .....	(306) 235-2220
.....	or 1-866-274-8506
Kelsey Trail .....	(306) 873-3100
.....	or 1-800-704-8395
Mamawetan Churchill River .....	(306) 425-2422
Prairie North .....	(306) 446-6622
Prince Albert Parkland.....	(306) 765-6100
.....	or 1-800-922-1834
Regina Qu'Appelle .....	(306) 766-5365
.....	or 1-888-354-8111
Saskatoon .....	(306) 665-1576
Sun Country.....	(306) 842-8718
Sunrise .....	(306) 786-0109

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### *pamphlets*

Arrest (also available in Plains and Woods Cree)	Health Care Directives
Assault	HIV/AIDS, The Law and You
Babysitting	Jail or Bail
Becoming a Lawyer	Joint Tenants or Tenants in Common
Being a Witness in Criminal Court	Legal Careers
Bicycling	Names and Changes of Names
Busted	Peace Bonds
Child Abuse and Neglect	Renting a Place to Live
Child and Spousal Maintenance	Sexual Assault
Child Protection Services	Social Assistance: Appeals
Custody and Access	Social Assistance: Applying
Debts	Social Assistance: Special Needs,
Going to a Lawyer	Advances, Overpayments
Going to Criminal Court	Unmarried Parents
Going to Youth Justice Court	Youth Criminal Justice Act
Harassment, Intimidation and Threats	

### *booklets*

Abuse of Older Adults	Environmental Law and the Farmer
Abusive Relationships	Farm Financial Difficulties
Administrative Law	Human Rights
Automobiles - Buying and Selling	Non Profit Organizations
Buying and Selling a Home	Older Adults and the Law
Buying Stuff	Power of Attorney
Consumer Contracts	Patients Rights
Consumer Fraud	Renting a Home
Consumer Wisdom	Single Parents
Criminal Law	Small Claims Court
Death in the Family	Special-care Homes
Debts and Credit	Warranties and Guarantees
Domestic Relations (Ending a Spousal Relationship)	Wills and Estates
Drugs, Alcohol and the Law	

Please note that some of the listed publications may be available in electronic format only.