

## 2018-2023 Nursing Home Plan

The total number of New Brunswick seniors aged 75 and older is expected to nearly double over the next 15 years. This will lead to increased demands for all types of long-term care services in the province.

Based on 2017 data, New Brunswick has the highest proportion of seniors among all provinces. This growth is attributed to a combination of the baby boom generation entering the senior demographic, declining birth rates, youth out-migration and longer life expectancies. This trend is expected to continue. In fact, Statistics Canada forecasts that over the next 20 years, the province's population will age faster than the rest of Canada.

The implementation of the 2018-2023 Nursing Home Plan underscores the high value placed on meeting the needs of our seniors. The Department of Social Development is committed to continuously monitoring the status of its infrastructure to ensure that the nursing home and memory care bed allocation is reflective of aging demographics during the course of this and all future plans.

Work continues on the implementation of the Home First Strategy, the Aging Strategy and other wellness-related initiatives. These have the common goal of establishing additional supports to enable seniors to remain in their homes and communities for as long as possible. These strategies include the need for facility-based care/beds. New Brunswick must continue to invest in nursing home facilities to ensure we are able to care for our seniors when and as that care is needed.

Your government is committed to improving the aging experience for seniors, their families and caregivers in New Brunswick. Senior citizens have helped build this province and they continue to take an active role in their communities each and every day. Keeping seniors active, healthy, happy and engaged is a top priority of your government. Although there are challenges with an aging population, there are also opportunities.

New Brunswick has an opportunity to become a leader in aging care in Canada. Along with the comprehensive, multi-year New Brunswick Aging Strategy, it has formed key partnerships with those in the aging-care sector and researchers all across the country to develop best practices and tools to keep seniors healthy longer.

### **The Plan Development Process**

The 2018-2023 Nursing Home Plan is an extension of the 2011-2016 Nursing Home Renovation & Replacement Plan. The 2018-2023 Plan was developed through an in-depth assessment of:

1. a demographic projection review;
2. current nursing home facility condition assessments; and
3. a review of design standards for new nursing homes.

The 2018-23 Plan is focused on meeting the need for additional beds. This plan also puts a focus on the continued expansion of the memory care model implemented in the previous plan.

## **Demographic Review**

The purpose of the demographic review component was to project the number of new nursing home beds required to meet the needs of New Brunswick seniors over the coming years

Based on census data from Statistics Canada and population projection models from 2016 through 2031, a need projection model for the province's future nursing home bed needs was created. The model took into consideration the following factors:

- the current level of service and desired level of service of nursing homes. This assessment was conducted in association with the province's efforts to establish greater supports to enable seniors to remain in their homes and communities for as long as possible;
- regional variations, including: projected population, language of service and existing level of service; and
- the existing nursing home waitlist and vacancy trends.

## **Facility Condition Assessment**

The facility condition assessment included an evaluation of the physical condition, room sizes, life safety and maintenance practices of 43 of New Brunswick's oldest nursing homes. The goal of the assessment was to provide information to support recommendations to either replace the aging infrastructure or complete capital upgrades to extend the lives of buildings. In this way, the assessment helps ensure that resources are directed to facilities most in need of upgrades or replacement.

It is clear that over the past eight years progress has been made on many fronts, which is reflected in the condition scores reported for each facility.

A functional survey was also completed in collaboration with the nursing homes. This information, along with the results of the facility condition assessment, serves to identify homes with key functional deficiencies that will require additional review.

## **Design Standards Review**

The Department of Transportation and Infrastructure and the Department of Social Development completed a review of the design standards for nursing homes with the objective of optimizing costs, aligning with current code changes, maintaining a high quality environment for residents and staff; building durability, and identifying operating efficiencies.

The design standards have evolved continuously throughout the implementation of the 2011-2016 Plan. A post-occupancy review was completed on recently built and operational homes. Based on this review, minor adjustments have been made to the design standards for nursing homes. As with all standards, they will be continuously improved, reviewed and refined to reflect best practices and feedback received.

**Results:**

An overall assessment process takes all of these considerations into account and forms the basis for the 2018-2023 Nursing Home Plan as outlined in Table 1. Projects are to be completed in three phases over a five-year period.

**TABLE 1: 2018-2023 Nursing Home Plan**

Phase	Estimated Timeline	New Beds			
		Region	Nursing Home	Memory Care	Nursing Home (Additions)
1	2018 Tender Complete 2021/22	1 Southeast	60	78	
		2 Saint John-Kings-Charlotte	60	18	
		3 Fredericton-River Valley	60	54	16
		4 Edmundston-Grand Falls		18	2
		6 Chaleur			1
		7 Greater Miramichi		36	
		8 Acadian Peninsula		27	
		2	2018/19 Tender Complete 2021/22	1 Southeast	60
2 Saint John-Kings-Charlotte				36	
3 Fredericton-River Valley	60				
5 Restigouche				36	
6 Chaleur	60			18	
8 Acadian Peninsula	60				
3	2019/20 Tender Complete 2022/23	1 Southeast	60	12	
		2 Saint John-Kings-Charlotte		56	
		3 Fredericton-River Valley	60	18	
		7 Greater Miramichi	60		
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>600</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>19</b>

**New Beds:** The primary objective of the 2018-2023 Nursing Home Plan is the addition of new beds into the system to meet the increased demand associated with an aging population and address the costs and challenges of an unsustainable number of Alternate Level of Care patients waiting in hospital for a placement.

Over the course of the new five-year plan, a total of 1,026 new beds will be added. The 1,026 new beds include 619 new nursing home beds and 407 new memory care beds.

**Memory Care Beds:** As the number of seniors continues to grow, so does the number of those who have Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. These individuals require supervision and assistance with their personal care needs but do not necessarily require ongoing nursing care. The needs of seniors with dementia can be met more appropriately in the quieter, individualized setting of a specialized facility offering beds for clients with Alzheimer's and other dementias, i.e. in memory care beds.

A review of regional demographics, waitlist and assessment data formed the basis for the decision to create 407 additional memory care beds throughout the province. The distribution of these memory care beds is described in Table 1.

### **Other Initiatives**

While the announcement of this plan focuses on new and replacement beds, there are a number of other initiatives that the department will undertake to better support the seniors sector in New Brunswick. For example, we will:

- continue to work with partners across the continuum of care to determine if existing beds can be used to address other care needs.
- continue to work with stakeholders to address recruitment and retention issues in the sector.
- continue developing initiatives designed to support a shift away from nursing home care toward a greater focus on healthy, active aging and in-home and community-based care integrated across sectors and services. These initiatives rely on innovative approaches to support seniors living in their own homes and continuing to be part of their communities.

Explore the expanded role of nurse practitioners and examine the development of an educational program for staff members that would include input from the gerontological community.