



2016 Designated Supportive Living Family and Resident Experience Fact Sheet

JULY 2017

The HQCA's 2016 Designated Supportive Living Surveys

In 2016, the Health Quality Council of Alberta (HQCA) surveyed residents and family members at designated supportive living facilities from across Alberta about their experiences with care and services. This work was done in collaboration with Alberta Health and Alberta Health Services (AHS) and is a follow-up to the HQCA's supportive living experience surveys in 2013-14.

What is supportive living?

Supportive living is a term used in Alberta to describe four levels of care for seniors and others who cannot live fully independently. It is a living option for individuals who want a maintenance-free environment, feel they are too isolated in their own home, or have more complex needs than those provided for by home care.

To some extent, individuals can choose which supportive living option is right for them. Based on an assessment of their needs by AHS, individuals may be eligible for a space or a room in publicly funded designated supportive living.

Although services for assessed care needs are publicly funded, residents are generally responsible for paying for their room, meals, housekeeping, and other optional services.

Supportive living facilities are not required to provide on-site 24-hour registered nurses or regularly scheduled visits by physicians. Higher levels of care are provided in nursing homes and auxiliary hospitals for Albertans who need more support or have more complex needs. These are classified as long-term care facilities and while they are not included in this survey, they are the focus of the HQCA's long-term care surveys (hqca.ca/surveys/continuing-care-experience).

The HQCA only surveyed residents and their families in designated supportive living facilities (levels three and four).

Survey results

The HQCA provides custom reports to each participating facility in the province about the experiences of their residents and family members.

The HQCA also provides a comprehensive provincial results report for both the resident and family member surveys to supportive living providers, Alberta Health Services, and Alberta Health.

As of September 2016, there were nearly 10,000 publicly funded designated supportive living spaces in Alberta. Supportive living facilities are operated under three ownership models (AHS, private, and voluntary). All are required to adhere to provincial standards to ensure residents are in a safe and comfortable environment and receive quality services.



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How can these survey results be used?

These reports can be used as a valuable source of input for quality improvement efforts. All participating facilities have also received their own facility-level results so they can better determine where to focus quality improvement efforts to best meet the needs of their residents and family members. The information can be used to assess current performance for facilities relative to their peers, and to explore changes over time. It can also be used to determine areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

All interested stakeholders, including families, residents, and the public are encouraged to review the complete provincial results, which are available online at www.hqca.ca, and facility-level reports, which are available at individual facilities.

The provincial reports also list the facilities in ranked order across a variety of measures.



How the HQCA did the surveys

These surveys were conducted in accordance with the HQCA's legislated mandate and Alberta privacy legislation requirements. Eligible respondents were identified using information provided by AHS and confirmed by participating supportive living facilities.

A note to families

The decision to move to a designated supportive living facility is often a stressful one for both the resident and their family. Choices can be limited by timing, cost, location, and personal needs and preferences. Families want to make the best possible choice for their loved ones under the circumstances. The experiences described here, and in the detailed reports, should be seen as one representation of the quality of care a resident receives. Other quality of care factors should be kept in mind, most importantly, the needs and preferences of the residents and families themselves.

For more information and to download the provincial reports visit www.hqca.ca/supportiveliving.

