

Long Term Care for Veterans

Issue

- The Government of Canada places the highest priority on making sure Veterans have the support they need, when they need it - and that includes access to long-term care.

Background

- The support that Veterans Affairs provides for Veterans who need long-term care is governed by the *Veterans Health Care Regulations*. Veteran eligibility depends on the type and location of military service, income, health care need, and whether the need for long-term care is related to a disability from military service.
- Support is provided in provincially licensed, regulated or operated health care facilities, most of which provide care to other provincial residents as well as Veterans, including:
 - facilities such as nursing homes and other long-term care facilities with beds that are open to Veterans as well as other provincial residents (community beds); and
 - facilities with beds designated through contractual arrangements with the province, health authority and/or facility for priority access for Second World War and Korean War Veterans (contract beds).
- Generally speaking, Second World War or Korean War Veterans can access a contract bed if they served overseas, or are income qualified, or have a disability related to their wartime military service.
- Veterans who served with Allied armed forces, War Veterans who served in Canada only for a minimum of 365 days, and have a low income, and Canadian Armed Forces Veterans who need care due to service-related disability can be supported in a community bed.

Considerations

- Veterans Affairs supports Veterans in long-term care in a number of ways. First, the Department subsidizes the accommodation and meal costs of eligible Veterans such that the maximum amount any Veteran needs to contribute towards their monthly resident fees is \$1,058 per month. Second, funding is provided to a number of facilities, primarily former Veterans hospitals, to support an enhanced level of services and specialized programs for War Veterans.

Current Status/Next Steps

- As of March 31, 2019, of the 4,521 Veterans supported by Veterans Affairs Canada:
 - 2,989 are in community beds, in 1,226 facilities; and
 - 1,532 are in contract beds, in 91 facilities.
- Expenditures in 2018-19 totaled \$222.5 M, with community beds and contract beds accounting for \$53.5 M and \$169.0 M respectively.
- In June 2016, Veterans Affairs launched a preferred admission initiative. Since then, agreements have been negotiated with ten former Veterans hospitals to expedite and expand access to Veterans who are eligible for care in a community facility other than a contract bed. Two other facilities already provide this access through internal policies. The goal is to have agreements with the 18 former Veterans hospitals transferred since the mid-1960s. As of October 2019, there are 247 beds available in ten former Veterans' hospitals under the preferred admission initiative.
- In addition to long-term care benefits, eligible Veterans may receive home care support and home health services through the Veterans Independence Program to help them stay independent in their own home as long as possible.

Recommended Holding Lines - Advice to Minister

- We place the highest priority on making sure Veterans have the support they need, when they need it - and that includes access to long-term care.
- We support Veterans and their long-term care needs in over 1,200 provincially and privately owned and operated facilities across the country.
- Veterans Affairs Canada works closely with provinces, health authorities and facilities to find solutions that ensure the well-being of Veterans.
- The Government is committed to supporting Canada's Veterans and their families and to ensuring that Veterans receive the respect, support, and care they deserve.