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NEWS RELEASE

Canada has a new National Long-Term Care Services Standard. How do current policies for long-term care homes stack up?

TORONTO, July 5, 2023 — Earlier this year, Health Standards Organization (HSO) published a new [National Long-Term Care Services Standard](#) to provide guidance on the delivery of resident-centred, high-quality long-term care (LTC) services. But because Canadian LTC homes are the responsibility of provinces and territories, before we can bring them in line with the new standard, we need to understand what provincial and territorial policies, legislation and directives they currently follow.






To do so, the National Institute on Ageing (NIA), in collaboration with HSO, completed a national review taking stock of the policy and regulatory landscape at the provincial, territorial and federal levels. Its findings, [released today in a new report](#), conclude that standards of care for services in LTC homes vary widely among Canada’s provinces and territories, underscoring the need for a national benchmark.

HSO, a non-profit standards development organization, began developing a new standard for LTC services in 2021, after the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted long-standing issues in Canada’s LTC home sector. The new standard, released in January 2023, was developed with input from more than 18,800 Canadians and a Long-Term Care Services Technical Committee chaired by **Dr. Samir Sinha**, the NIA’s Director of Health Policy Research.

While the new standard is national in scope, LTC services are primarily governed at the provincial or territorial level, with multiple policies, directives and legislation playing a role. The NIA undertook a comprehensive review of these government documents in each province and territory and evaluated them against the six sections that make up the new HSO National LTC Services Standard:

1. Governing LTC Homes’ Strategies, Activities and Outcomes
2. Upholding Resident-Centred Care
3. Enabling a Meaningful Quality of Life for Residents
4. Ensuring High-Quality and Safe Care
5. Enabling a Healthy and Competent Workforce
6. Promoting Quality Improvement

“A better understanding of where gaps and alignment exist between the new National LTC Services Standard and existing standards can help support the provincial, territorial and federal authorities that are overseeing and working to improve the delivery and quality of LTC home services across Canada,” said Sinha, who also co-authored the NIA report.

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The NIA’s review found varying levels of alignment between the provinces and territories and the national standard, including inconsistent oversight of key safety practices and varying requirements for workforce procedures and policies.

“A broader alignment could enable a more consistent approach to the provision of care in LTC homes across Canada,” said **Arushan Arulnamby**, NIA Policy Analyst and lead author of the report. “The results of this jurisdictional review highlight why it’s so important to have an evidence-informed national standard for services at LTC homes in Canada.”






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About The National Institute on Ageing

The National Institute on Ageing is a think tank at Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson University) focused on the realities of Canada’s ageing population. Follow us on Twitter @NIAgeing and support our call for a National Seniors Strategy @NSS_Now.

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