



Planning for Your Care Needs: Help in Selecting a Residential Care Facility

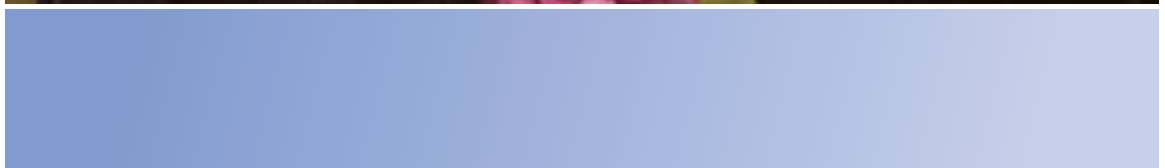
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Where do I start?

If you, or a loved one, are experiencing difficulties managing at home, please talk to your physician or nurse practitioner. They will help you understand how your health care needs may affect your ability to live safely at home. You may also contact your local health authority home and community care program for assistance. They will meet with you and help you determine what services and supports may be available to you, including services to support you in your home.

In British Columbia, there are a range of housing, support and care options for people who need assistance to maintain their health. This booklet provides information about residential care services, and also includes descriptions of other services available to help you. Care and support are available from both publicly subsidized and private pay service providers throughout the province. These services assist people who are having difficulty coping with activities of daily living, such as bathing and dressing, because of health-related problems or a life-limiting illness. Publicly subsidized services are accessible through your local health authority.

The Seniors B.C. website (www.seniorsbc.ca) also provides information about services that may be available in your community. Seniors B.C. provides information about government programs and services for older adults. The goal is to provide B.C. citizens with one place to go to find all the information they need to plan for and to live a healthy, active aging lifestyle.

In addition, the Community Care Facilities Licensing website (www.health.gov.bc.ca/ccf) offers information about the types of care facilities that are available.

Seniors B.C. and Community Care Facilities Licensing may refer you to your local health authority to help you determine what housing options and support services are available to you and if moving into a residential care facility is an option. Many communities have a range of support services such as alert systems, home support, adult day programs, bathing programs and palliative care services. These supports may enable you to maintain your independence as much as possible.

The health authority will provide you with information about the options that are available to you in your community, including which services and facilities are publicly subsidized and the process you need to follow to access these services. As well, there are private pay services that you can contact directly to arrange these services. For private pay services, you do not need the health authority to assess your eligibility.

The Seniors B.C. website is an excellent source of information for seniors and their families.

The B.C. Seniors' Guide (www.gov.bc.ca/seniorsguide) contains information and resources to help us all plan for and live a healthy lifestyle as we age. It includes information about provincial and federal programs, benefits, health, lifestyle, housing, transportation, finances, safety and security and other services.

Additionally, you may call HealthLink B.C. at 8-1-1 to speak to a health service representative, who can connect you with a registered nurse at any time, or go online to www.healthlinkbc.ca for information on how to contact health care resources. Hearing impaired services are also available by dialling 7-1-1.

Is this handbook for you?

Whether you are looking for yourself, or you are helping someone in a residential care setting, this booklet has been designed to help you. It contains a number of questions you may wish to consider as you make your decision. Although you may not have time to consider all of these questions, they are intended as a guide so you may choose the items that are most important to you.

Publically subsidized residential care facilities provide care for individuals who need significant personal support and nursing care. The decision to move into a residential care facility is a significant one and there may be other options that may be more suitable for you. Your physician, nurse practitioner or other health care provider can help you decide.

In B.C., residential care and support options are available from both publicly subsidized and private pay service providers. This booklet also contains information about eligibility, cost, services, oversight, and practical examples of things to consider when selecting a residential care facility.

Advance Care Planning

Advance care planning gives your friends, family and health care providers the information and tools they need for the future if you become incapable of making your own health care decisions. By planning ahead, you can ease the burden of your loved ones at a difficult time and can make sure your wishes and instructions are known. Advance care planning begins by thinking about your beliefs, values and wishes regarding future health care treatment. It is about having conversations with your close family, friends and health care provider(s) so that they know the health care treatment you would agree to, or refuse, if you become incapable of expressing your own decisions.

When you write down your beliefs, values and wishes for future health care, you are creating an advance care plan. Your advance care plan may include legal tools, such as a representative agreement or advance directive. It is important that family, friends and care providers know you have completed an advance care plan and that it is easily accessible if it is needed. Completing or updating your advance care plan is important as it will ensure that your family, friends and health care providers know about the decisions you would make for yourself.

The B.C. government's advance care planning guide is called *My Voice: Expressing My Wishes for Future Health Care Treatment*. You can use it to learn about advance care planning and to make your own advance care plan that will serve as your voice in the future. More information is available at: www.gov.bc.ca/advancecare.



Residential Care in B.C.

People who live in residential care facilities usually have complex health care needs that require daily care from trained health care and nursing staff. They often need caregivers to help with their activities of daily living such as bathing, assistance with mobility, dressing and personal hygiene. Many persons who live in residential care facilities may also have significant memory challenges associated with dementia and need a secure environment to keep them safe.

In British Columbia, all residential care facilities are licensed under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* or the *Hospital Act*. These facilities are sometimes informally referred to as long term care, extended care or nursing homes.

Residential care services are provided in a variety of settings. These include larger residential facilities and smaller specialized group home settings. While most people who receive services in a residential care setting are seniors, there are specialized facilities that provide care to people with developmental disabilities, chronic mental illness, brain injury or substance dependence.

Some residential care facilities are located in a campus of care that provides a range of housing, support and care options, including independent living, assisted living and residential care. These settings may provide an opportunity for spouses to live close to one another if they have significantly different care needs. Others are stand alone facilities that provide only residential care services. In some smaller communities, these facilities may be co-located with community hospitals. Facility size may also range from a small group home setting to a large building providing care to 100 persons or more.

There are some residential care facilities that offer short stay services such as respite, convalescent care and end-of-life care. Respite services are opportunities for spouses, family members or other caregivers to have a break from care giving. Convalescent services provide persons with a period of time to recover from an illness or hospital stay before returning safely home.

All residential care facilities provide palliative care to persons who are nearing the end of life. Some residential care facilities have a small number of specialized beds, known as hospice, for persons nearing the end of life. These may be used by persons living at home in the community who require more intensive professional nursing care.



What services are provided in residential care facilities?

Each person in a residential care facility is an individual who brings a unique perspective of their personal and health care needs and their own approaches in managing them which is often influenced by cultural, spiritual or family customs.

To ensure that each resident's care needs are met, a personal care plan is developed together with the resident, physician, family members or other caregivers. The care plan identifies each resident's abilities, preferences and needs, as well as the supports that are needed to promote their health and well being. The care plan guides all those involved in the resident's care and is regularly reviewed. Residential care facilities must also ensure that the individual's health status is reviewed regularly by a health care professional, such as a physician or nurse

The following services are provided to all people residing in residential care facilities:

- meals and snacks, including any special diets;
- medication storage and administration;
- assistance with activities of daily living (e.g., bathing, eating, mobility, dressing, grooming or personal hygiene);
- access to social and recreational activities; and
- management of residents' cash (e.g., comfort fund).

What does residential care cost?

The facilities described in this booklet may receive funding from the government through health authorities (publicly subsidized), be privately operated (receive no funding from the government) or be a combination of both.

A person who is considering moving into residential care may receive an assessment from a health authority case manager who will determine eligibility for receiving a government subsidy. If eligible for subsidy, the person pays a percentage of their income up to a maximum amount, (as established by regulation under the *Continuing Care Act*) toward the cost of the care, accommodation and other supports provided in the publicly subsidized facility (e.g., recreational programming).

There is also the option for people to live in private pay facilities to receive the care and supervision they need. In a private pay facility, persons receiving care pay for the full amount of their care and accommodation, and arrangements are made by a potential resident (or their family) to receive those services. The facility staff conducts an assessment to decide whether or not the facility can provide the services that are being requested. In private pay facilities, the services and accommodation received are part of a private business arrangement between the service provider and the person in care and are defined through a contract.

What is not included in the fixed cost? (allowable extra charges)

The administrator or director of care of a residential care facility must provide you with a full list of any charges that you will be expected to pay in addition to the base client rate. Be sure to ask for a list of the personal items which the facility supplies and a list of those you will be responsible for. For example, you may have to pay for your magazine or newspaper subscriptions, dry cleaning, personal telephone or cablevision in your room. You may also be responsible for buying, leasing or obtaining the use of any special equipment required for your own use (e.g., wheelchairs, walkers and special medications not covered by PharmaCare).

Where are residential care facilities located in B.C.?

The following websites contain listings of B.C. residential care facilities licensed under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* or the *Hospital Act*. Please remember to visit the facility you are interested in to ensure it meets your needs.

www.health.gov.bc.ca/ccf/survey/index.php/displaycommunity/index

Residential care facilities by health authority:

- ✓ Fraser Health: www.fraserhealth.ca/FindUs/_layouts/FindUs/4k.aspx?type=EV
- ✓ Interior Health: www.interiorhealth.ca/FindUs/_layouts/FindUs/4k.aspx?type=EV
- ✓ Northern Health: www.northernhealth.ca/OurServices/Facilities.aspx
- ✓ Vancouver Coastal Health: www.vch.ca/403/7676/?program_id=1373
- ✓ Vancouver Island Health Authority: www.viha.ca/hcc/residential/locations/

How are Residential Care Facilities Monitored?

Residential care facilities receive regular monitoring and inspection to ensure that the minimum standards are being met. These standards include cleanliness, food quality, building and furniture acceptability and documentation. Health authorities monitor and inspect residential care facilities to ensure that they are meeting the standards that are set by the government. Health authorities also have a responsibility to investigate complaints and to work with operators to promote the health and safety of residents. If needed, health authorities are also legally authorized to take action to ensure standards are met to protect persons in care.

Questions, Complaints or Concerns

If you have a question or concern about a particular residential care facility, please speak with the manager, director of care or administrator of the facility. If your question or concern cannot be resolved, please contact your local health authority's Patient Care Quality Office.

If your concern is a serious issue regarding the health, safety or well being of a person in care, you should immediately contact your local health authority and ask to speak to a community care facilities licensing officer. If the facility is not required to be licensed under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* or the *Hospital Act*, the licensing officer can direct you to the appropriate authority which is responsible for monitoring the facility.

If you have a concern about the quality of care that you or a loved one is receiving, it is best to raise this concern at the time and place care is being provided. However, if this does not address your concern or you would like to make a formal care quality complaint, you are encouraged to contact the Patient Care Quality Office in your health region.

Patient Care Quality Offices (toll-free):

- ✓ Fraser Health: 1 877 880-8823
- ✓ Interior Health: 1 877 442-2001
- ✓ Northern Health: 1 877 677-7715
- ✓ Vancouver Coastal Health: 1 877 993-9199
- ✓ Vancouver Island Health Authority: 1 877 977-5797

While confidentiality of a complainant will be protected, anonymity cannot be guaranteed. If an investigation becomes a criminal matter or results in action taken against the operator, or if the issue is taken to the Community Care and Assisted Living Appeal Board, information or documents a complainant provides may become public information.

What factors are important to you and your family in choosing a residential care facility?

Residential care facilities typically have policies about facility tours and pre-admission visits. These policies are developed to protect the privacy and dignity of residents who call the facility home. Please do not drop by and expect a staff member to stop what they are doing to provide a tour. It is better to check with the facility first and arrange a convenient time to visit so that staff are available to show you around and provide an overview of the services that are available. You may also want to take a family member or trusted friend with you when you visit.

If possible, it is best to visit each facility you are considering. Many facilities have information brochures available that provide an overview of their services and approach to care. A good information package will answer many of the questions listed in this booklet. If you have access to a computer, you may also check if the facility you are interested has a website, as many have helpful information online.

When you visit, ask for a copy of the admissions contract/agreement that describes the care and accommodation that is available. The agreement should also describe the costs of available services as well as any extra charges that may apply for special additional services (e.g., hairdressing, dental check up, podiatry).

In B. C., there is legislation to protect people who enter into contracts, including those for services which will be delivered in the future, such as residential care services. These contracts, known as future performance contracts, are regulated under B.C.'s *Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act* and the Consumer Contracts Regulation.

Contracts for residential care services must include a description of the range of services available at the facility. Care services (e.g., bathing and dressing) are provided to residents based on their individual care plans. Hospitality services (e.g., housekeeping, meals, recreational programming) are provided to all residents. The cost of services is based on a percentage of income for subsidized facilities, or an agreed upon amount in private pay facilities. All consumers are entitled to know, in advance, what they will be charged per month and must understand that they may refuse additional services if they do not wish to receive them.



Preparing for your facility tour

If you are receiving help and services from your local health authority or another ministry, you will have a case manager who will have assessed your need for residential care and will determine your client rate for publicly subsidized residential care services. However, if you are considering a private pay facility, please speak with the manager or director of care or admissions staff at the facility to ask about admissions; whether they have a waitlist you can add your name to, and how long it might be until you can expect to move in.

Here are some questions to keep in mind as you tour residential care facilities. Before you go, think about what is important to you in selecting your new home. While you might not be able to explore all of these, the following questions are intended to help you think about what is important to you in the decision making process.

Housing

Costs and monthly charges

- Is there a security deposit? How much is it?
- What damages are you responsible for?
- Do you need tenant insurance? If so, what type?
- If the facility is private pay, what is the daily rate or monthly rate?
- What extra charges can be expected in addition to the daily accommodation rate/user fee? (e.g., private rooms, extra services, alert pendants)
- What is the refund policy if you move out before the end of a month?
- How much notice is required?
- Do you continue to pay if you are away from the facility on vacation or in hospital?

Living space and accommodations

- Are private rooms available? If you are considering a private pay facility, will there be an extra charge for a private room?
- If the facility has shared rooms, how will your privacy be insured?
- If the facility has a limited number of private rooms, is there a waitlist for these rooms? How is the waitlist managed?
- Do you like the bedroom and bathroom areas? Do they look comfortable?
- How much storage and closet space will you have? Is there a cupboard or drawer that locks for personal items?
- Can you bring some of your own possessions? (e.g., pictures, furniture, television)
- Can you have a phone in your room? If not, is there a phone that is private and accessible?
- Can you have a small appliance in your room? (e.g., electric blanket, mini-fridge, fan, air conditioner)
- Is there room for a wheelchair, scooter or walker in the bedroom and washroom area?
- Is food storage allowed in bedrooms?
- Is alcohol allowed in bedrooms?

Security

- Can you lock your bedroom door if you wish?
- How will your private information be protected?
- Who is responsible if personal valuables disappear or are broken?
- Will the outside doors be locked overnight?

Emergencies

- What policies and plans are in place to ensure the safety of residents in the event of an emergency, such as an earthquake, fire, or snowstorm?
- What is the policy on contacting families in the event of an emergency or illness?

Hospitality Services

Dining and Food services

- Are menus posted? Are there choices? Do you have input into the menu?
- Are the meals provided compatible with your special diet, cultural or religious background?
- Is there a central dining room or is there a dining room on each floor?
- Is the dining room within easy walking distance from residents' rooms?
- Can you choose where you will sit in the dining room?
- What time are meals served? Are the meal times flexible?
- If you are ill, will you be able to have your meals served in your room?
- Are dietary supplements provided if your doctor/health care provider orders them?
- If you have trouble eating, will staff be available to help? Will family be expected to help out with meals if they are available?
- Can guests be invited to a meal? If guests can be invited to a meal, how much will this cost and how is this arranged?
- Is there an area where residents and families can make a cup of coffee, tea, or a snack?

Laundry

- Are laundry facilities available if you would like to do some of your own laundry?
- Are laundry supplies provided?
- What items of personal clothing may be sent to the laundry?
- Who is responsible for mending personal clothing?
- Does all clothing need to be labelled? If so, will the facility label items?



Care

Personal Care

- What are the bathing policies of the facility? Can you have a bath or shower when you wish?
- Is there any special equipment available, such as lift equipment or wheelchair showers?
- Can you use your own soap and shampoo?
- If the facility provides toiletries, is there an extra cost?
- How many people share each shower and/or bathing area?
- How will your privacy be assured during bathing?
- Who will help you if you need assistance going to the toilet or bathing/showering?
- Are incontinence supplies provided without charge?
- What is the policy in the facility if you prefer to use a type of incontinence supply that differs from the type provided?

Staffing

- Does the facility have a multi-disciplinary health care team? Are there registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, health care aides, physiotherapists or others?
- Are the health care aides all registered with the B.C. Care Aide and Community Health Worker Registry?

Medical and Other Professionals

- Can your own doctor/health care provider/clinician continue to care for you in the facility?
- Does the facility have its own physician or nurse practitioner?
- Will you be able to stay at the facility if your care needs change or increase?
- Are rehabilitation services, such as physiotherapy, available?
- Will facility staff help with daily care of teeth or dentures (flossing, cleaning, etc.) if needed?
- Does a dental hygienist, denturist, or dentist visit the facility? If so, who arranges and pays for these services?
- Is hairdressing and barber service available?
- Does a podiatrist or nurse that provides foot care regularly visit the facility?
- If you need extra health care services, how can you access them?

Medication Services

- Who is responsible for administering medication?
- Is there a charge for “over the counter” medications (e.g., Tylenol, Aspirin, suppositories)?
- How is payment for over the counter medications managed?
- What is the policy relating to medication? Can you take your own medication or take your medication with you when you are away from the facility?

Supports

Visitors and Time Away

- Are visitors welcome at reasonable times?
- Can visitors bring pets?
- Are overnight visitors permitted?
- Can you go away for weekends and/or holidays?

Social and Spiritual Activities

- If special indoor and outdoor walking areas are provided, is there a secure entry/exit to this area?
- Is there a policy on paid companions?
- Is there a comfortable lounge or living room for socializing or entertaining visitors?
- Are there special rooms or areas where you can visit privately with family and friends?
- Is there a garden or patio?
- Is there outdoor shelter for protection from the wind and rain?
- Can you go outside when you wish?
- What is the policy on smoking?
- Is there an area or special room for crafts and other activities?
- What kinds of activities, musical programs, entertainment, outings, and crafts are available, and how often do they occur?
- Are activities scheduled during evenings and on weekends?
- Where is the list of activities, musical programs, entertainment, outings and crafts posted?
- How are residents and families involved in planning activities?
- Can residents bring their own pets to live at the facility?
- Does the facility have a pet visiting program?
- Are religious services or pastoral care available?
- Are birthdays celebrated? If so, how?
- Is there a wheelchair-accessible van or bus (if applicable) that provides transportation for residents for outings?

Persons with Dementia/Alzheimer's Disease

- Does the facility provide care to persons with dementia/Alzheimer's disease?
- If so, is there separate accommodation specifically for persons with dementia/Alzheimer's disease?
- Are there special social and recreational activities for persons with dementia/Alzheimer's disease?

Financial

- What are the policies regarding the storage of money and valuables?
- Can you do your own banking? If not, where will your spending money be kept and how are receipts issued?
- Where is the closest bank machine?

Family Councils

- Does the facility have a resident/family council? If so, are the notes or minutes from the meeting posted for everyone to read? How do you and/or your family/representative get involved?
- How are you and/or your family/representative involved in planning and regular reviews of care?

Residential Care Facility Policies

- What is the policy if residents or family members have a complaint?
- Is the Resident's Bill of Rights posted in public view? Can you have a copy?
- Can you and/or your family have access to the policy and procedures manual for the facility?

Next Steps

Once you have decided to move into a residential care facility and have picked the top two or three that are most suited to your needs, what happens next?

If you have a case worker in the health authority or other agency/ministry, you and your family will discuss your options for residential care. Additional information about the facilities you have selected will be provided, including the approximate wait time. Based on this information, you and your family will choose your first preference for a facility.

If your case worker determines your health and safety concerns to be urgent, you will be contacted by him or her when an appropriate bed becomes available. You must be prepared to accept the first appropriate bed offered and arrange to move into the facility within 48 hours.

If you are moving into the facility where you will be paying the full costs of your care and accommodation, you and your family will need to discuss the services you will receive (and their costs) with the director of care or manager of the facility you have selected.

Moving in

Many residents find that when they move into a residential care home, they will make new friends and take part in more activities than before.

The goal is for you to continue to stay connected with your family and friends, get involved with your new community and take part in your care to the extent you are able.

Here are a few ideas to help you as you transition:

- Talk with staff members about your preferences so they get to know you;
- Keep in touch with friends, family and spiritual advisors;
- Bring some of your cherished possessions, including pictures, to make your new space feel like home;
- Get connected in your new home, meet new people and try new things;
- Ask for help when you need it;
- Ask questions if routines aren't clear to you; and
- Be patient with yourself – settling in takes time.

Appendix 1: What is the range of housing and care options that are available in B.C.?

In B.C., care and support are available from both publicly subsidized and private pay service providers for people having difficulty managing safely at home because of health-related problems or a life-threatening illness. Home and community care services can assist you on a short-term or long-term basis depending upon your care needs (acute, chronic, palliative or rehabilitative). Publicly subsidized services include home support, adult day services, residential care and palliative care. These services are designed to complement and supplement, but not replace, your efforts to care for yourself with the assistance of your family, friends and community.

Home and community care services are based on need, and depending on the service, may be subsidized according to income or provided at no cost.

Home and community care services:

- support you to remain independent and in your own home for as long as possible;
- provide services at home when you would otherwise require admission to hospital or would stay longer in hospital;
- provide assisted living and residential care services if you can no longer be supported in your home; and
- provide services that support you and your family if you are nearing the end of your life – at home, in an assisted living residence or in a residential care facility (including hospice).

For detailed information on the full range of publicly subsidized home and community care services including eligibility criteria, how to arrange for care, costs for services, how to manage your care, accountability, concerns and complaints, visit the home and community care website at: www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/theme.page?id=A8F32056E4192102A51A3F0FF373223C.

Residential Care and Assisted Living: What is the difference?

The Community Care and Assisted Living Regulation describes the services which may be provided in residential care facilities and assisted living residences (prescribed services).

Assisted living residences can only provide one or two prescribed services. Residential care facilities provides three or more prescribed services. These prescribed services include:

- Regular assistance with activities of daily living including eating, mobility, dressing, grooming, bathing or personal hygiene;
- Central storage of medication, distribution of medication, administering medication or monitoring the taking of medication;
- Maintenance or management of the cash resources or other property of a resident;
- Monitoring of food intake or adherence to therapeutic diets;
- Structured behaviour management and intervention; and
- Psychosocial rehabilitative therapy or intensive physical rehabilitative therapy.

Residential care facilities provide 24-hour care and supervision in a protective and supportive environment for people who have complex care needs and can no longer be cared for in their own homes. Assisted living residences provide housing, hospitality and personalized assistance for adults who can live independently but require regular assistance with daily activities — usually because of age, illness or disabilities. They do not provide 24-hour professional care and supervision.

Appendix 2: Regulations, Licensing and Complaints

Any person providing residential care services to three or more adults who are not related to them must be licensed under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* or under the *Hospital Act*. Private hospitals and extended care facilities' are regulated by the *Hospital Act*.

The *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* sets out specific regulations — the Residential Care Regulation — which set minimum legal standards for:

- ☑ health and safety;
- ☑ building requirements;
- ☑ food service;
- ☑ administering medications; and,
- ☑ resident care.

All residential care facilities should have their licence posted for your information. This licence will tell you how many persons the facility can provide care for. The *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* and the Residential Care Regulation are available through:

Crown Publications

PO Box 9452 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9V7

Phone: 1 800 663-6105 (toll-free in BC)

Fax: 250 387-1120

They are also available online:

Community Care and Assisted Living Act:

www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_02075_01

Residential Care Regulation:

www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_02075_01

In addition to the above act and regulation, the B.C. government passed a Residents' Bill of Rights (www.health.gov.bc.ca/ccf/pdf/adultcare_bill_of_rights.pdf) in 2009 to promote the rights of adults who live in residential care facilities. The Residents' Bill of Rights is a comprehensive set of rights that is grouped into four main themes: commitment to care; rights to health, safety and dignity; rights to participation and freedom of expression; and rights to transparency and accountability.

In addition, the Patient Care Quality Office (www.viha.ca/patientcarequalityoffice/) has been established to respond to quality care complaints about your own care, your loved ones care, or care that you or your loved one expected but did not receive.

Once a complaint has been investigated and is substantiated, a summary of the complaint is posted on the health authority website. Personal identifying information regarding the residents, staff or complainants will not be posted on the website. The facility operator name and business contact information will be posted to allow people to contact the facility if they have any additional questions or concerns.

