

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**B.C. Seniors Advocate invites British Columbians
to participate in the second landmark survey of people in residential care**

VICTORIA – The Office of the Seniors Advocate is launching the second province-wide survey of the experiences of residents living in all 294 publicly-subsidized long-term care homes in B.C. and is calling on all interested British Columbians to join the survey team.

“In 2016/17, we conducted the most extensive study of residents’ quality of life in Canada. Over 800 caring and committed British Columbians volunteered to visit every care home in B.C. and gave voice to over 10,000 residents,” said B.C. Seniors Advocate Isobel Mackenzie. “Five years later, we once again call upon those who want to be part of improving the quality of life of seniors in long-term care to volunteer and join the survey team. We know British Columbians care deeply about seniors, and through participating in this survey, you can help shape the future for people in residential care homes across the province.”

Members of the survey team will include British Columbians from a wide variety of backgrounds who engage with the seniors as equals in a conversation about what life is like in the place they live. The surveyors are supported by health care professionals from the Ministry of Health, health authorities and individual care homes. Volunteers will be screened for suitability and participate in training sessions to prepare them for conducting surveys with a minimum of 10 care home residents during the survey period.

Information about joining the survey team is available at www.surveybcseniors.org or by calling the Office of the Seniors Advocate toll free at 1 877 952-3181 or 2-1-1.

The long-term care quality of life survey examines topics such as food, safety, comfort, respect and responsiveness of staff, personal relationships, medications and activities. Residents will be interviewed in person and their family members will be invited to participate by phone, online or via a written survey. The survey will be conducted at care homes across the province between June 2022 and February 2023. A final report is planned for spring 2023.

The 2017 final report ‘Every Voice Counts: Provincial Residential Care Survey Results’ made recommendations for system improvements including:

- increasing care hours and ensuring staffing levels are enforced and monitored by health authorities;
- increasing flexibility of how and when care and services are delivered;
- examining opportunities to improve the mealtime experience;
- advising health authorities to administer a similar quality of care survey to care home residents and family members in 2019/20 and publish the results;



- increasing training focused on the emotional needs of residents;
- foster greater engagement with family members particularly in regard to family councils and visitor handwashing;
- better physician care and increasing the role of nurse practitioners to improve care;
- increasing the range of activities, particularly in the evenings and weekends; and
- undertaking the survey again in five years.

The Office of the Seniors Advocate is an independent office of the provincial government with a mandate of monitoring seniors' services and reporting on systemic issues affecting seniors. The office also provides information and referral to seniors and their caregivers by calling toll free 1 877 952-3181, BC211, via email at info@seniorsadvocate.ca, Canada Post and the OSA web site <https://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/>.

Quick Facts:

- In 2016/17, over 800 survey volunteers donated over 25,000 hours visiting every long-term care home in B.C.
 - Over 10,000 residents and 10,000 most frequent visitors, who are usually family members, were surveyed.
- Volunteers will be screened and, if suitable, participate in a one-day training session; each will be asked for a commitment of a minimum of 40 hours over the survey period.
 - Each volunteer surveyor will be assigned to a care home and responsible for surveying a certain number of residents.
- The 2022/23 survey will be offered in English, French, Punjabi, Chinese Simplified (Mandarin) and Chinese Traditional (Cantonese), German, Spanish, Korean, Persian, Filipino and Italian. Additional languages will be added when/if needed based on information from care home operators.

To learn more, visit:

- 2017 'Every Voice Counts: Provincial Residential Care Survey Results' report <https://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/osa-reports/residential-care-survey/>

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