
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health

B.C. supports seniors aging at home with new virtual service

VICTORIA – Seniors will be supported to stay in their homes longer with a new virtual service that provides some of the essential support of a long-term care facility in their own home.

“Seniors prefer to live in their own home receiving supports and assistance, in a space that is familiar and comfortable,” said Adrian Dix, Minister of Health. “This innovative long-term care at home approach provides seniors and their loved ones with the services they need to age safely and independently for as long as possible.”

The Long-term Care at Home program (LTC@Home) equips seniors’ homes with technology for virtual care and monitoring, customized to an individual’s needs and monitored by a care team who checks in if an alert is received. It also includes respite care to help alleviate family caregiver burnout, extending their ability to care for a loved one in the home longer.

Similar to long-term care residence monitoring, the programs’ technology will monitor seniors in their homes for fall detection, activity levels, medication adherence, wandering and vitals where appropriate to the individual.

“This virtual program will empower seniors to age in the comfort of their own homes,” said Harwinder Sandhu, Parliamentary Secretary for Seniors’ Services and Long-Term Care. “By embracing new solutions and tailored support, our government continues to take action to ensure the safety of seniors, so they can age with dignity and security. This new program will provide comfort and assurance to seniors and their families by delivering the quality health care needed to age in place.”

A variety of devices may be used for equipping a senior’s home. Examples include a tablet for connecting to loved ones or participating in virtual programs, a wearable pendant or wall mounted device for fall detection, two-way emergency calls, and sensors installed throughout the home. The combination of devices used is tailored to the seniors’ home and health needs, ensuring they are safe wherever they are in their home.

“This program will give seniors in Saanich South and throughout B.C. the long-term care support they need within their own homes, keeping them safe and providing their loved ones with peace of mind,” said Lana Popham, MLA for Saanich South.

The LTC@Home program is designed to support seniors who feel this is a viable solution for them, and whose care needs meet at least one of the following criteria:

- on or eligible for long-term care wait list and is living at home with a primary caregiver (family or friend);
- on or eligible for assisted living wait list and is living at home; or

- living at home with or without a primary caregiver and is capable of managing daily activities, but is at risk of isolation, at an elevated risk of a fall, or would benefit from vitals monitoring and/or medication dispensing.

The project is being piloted with the support of KinVillage in Delta (11 seniors enrolled) and Broadmead Care Society in Victoria (15 seniors enrolled), with a goal of supporting more than 2,700 seniors and their caregivers over the next four years, and expanding to other communities around B.C. over the next 18 months. The KinVillage hub for the virtual program launched June 17, 2024. Broadmead is installing technology in homes this week, with all 15 clients set up over the next few weeks.

The program is funded through the Canada-British Columbia Aging with Dignity agreement, which provides up to \$47 million over four years. This agreement bolsters B.C.'s investments to meet the needs of seniors by enhancing access to high-quality, safe and dignified care. Funding flows to long-term care partners to support implementation and operating costs, including hiring program management and implementation staff, technology procurement, contracts for program monitoring and evaluation, and necessary renovations and equipment.

Quotes:

Glenn Maxwell, Long-Term Care at Home participant at Broadmead –

“I’m in my mid-70s. I have issues with balance and falling due to profound hearing impairment and vertigo. With this new technology, I feel supported in my own home. I am thankful for the options provided by the Long-term Care at Home initiative through Broadmead Care.”

Dan Levitt, B.C.’s seniors advocate –

“We know seniors want the choice to age in the comfort of their own homes, close to family, friends and neighbours. This initiative will extend services typically only available in long-term care homes to older adults living in the community, supporting the desire for more independent living, while potentially reducing pressure on other areas of the health-care system.”

Derrick Bernardo, president and CEO, Broadmead Care –

“Broadmead Care is excited to be part of launching the Long-term Care at Home program, which embodies our focus on safe, secure, person-centred care that allows people to age with dignity in the place of their choosing.”

Jennifer Fisher, CEO, KinVillage –

“Piloting the Long-term Care at Home program is an exciting opportunity and a great addition to the services that KinVillage currently provides to older adults in our community. The addition of respite care aligns with our goal to meet the needs of our clients’ caregivers to ensure they are better equipped and have access to services to safely maintain their loved ones at home as long as possible.”

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