

NEWS RELEASE

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Family experience survey in Alberta provides voice for quality improvement in long-term care

(Calgary, AB) The Health Quality Council of Alberta (HQCA) today released results of a 2017 survey of family experiences with long-term care facilities across Alberta. The [Long-term Care Family Experience Survey](#), completed by the HQCA four times over the last 10 years, has shown little to no change provincially in family experience between the survey cycles. In the report released today, the majority of facilities did not show any change in each of the key measures of care and services since the 2014 survey.

The 64 per cent survey response rate in 2017 demonstrates that family members want their voice heard with respect to quality of care at long-term care facilities in the province.

“Every Albertan deserves to receive quality care, especially those that have contributed so many years to this province and have now entrusted their care to those of us who work in the healthcare system,” says Dr. Tony Fields, Chair, HQCA Board of Directors. “Our healthcare system can and must do better. It is truly a collective responsibility from front-line providers and facility operators, all the way up to health system governance to look at the results and see how we can continuously improve residents’ experiences.”

Family members rated their overall experience with their resident’s long-term care facility from 0 to 10 (with 0 being the worst care possible and 10 being the best). The individual facility scores ranged from 6.6 to 9.7 out of 10.

“We are honoured to conduct this work on behalf of residents in long-term care and their family members,” says Andrew Neuner, Chief Executive Office, HQCA. “The HQCA is committed to working with operators, administrators, and decision-makers with responsibilities for planning and delivering continuing care services in Alberta to ensure their voices are heard.”

“As pioneers of our province and communities, long-term care residents deserve the utmost respect. Family interaction and feedback is essential as the healthcare system strives for continuous improvements in quality of care,” says D’Arcy Duquette, chair, HQCA Patient and Family Advisory Committee.

Areas showing the greatest opportunities for quality improvement include:

- Only 18 per cent of family members said there were always enough nurses or aides.
- Approximately 47 per cent of family members always felt that nurses and aides really cared about their family member.
- Among family members who requested information about their family member from a nurse or aide, 47 per cent said they always received the information as soon as they wanted.

- Among family members who helped their family member with toileting, 53 per cent said they helped with toileting because they waited too long or did not receive help.
- Among family members who had concerns, only 13 per cent were always satisfied with the way staff handled these concerns.

Additional survey facts

- Family members rated overall care at their facilities at an average of 8.4 out of 10. Individual facility scores ranged from 6.6 to 9.7 out of 10.
- The majority of facilities did not show any significant improvement or decline in each of the key measures of care and services since the 2014 survey. Among those that did see change, the majority were improvements.
- On average, 93% of family members would recommend their facility to others.
- Family members' top recommendation for improvement was to ensure enough staff are available to meet residents' care needs.
- Smaller facilities have more positive family member experiences than at larger facilities.
- Individual facilities receive detailed facility-level reports to learn about areas they are doing well, and areas for improvement.
- Over the past 10 years, there have been no significant changes provincially between each survey cycle.

Long Term Care Family Experience Survey Report – Provincial Results is available at www.hqca.ca.

The Health Quality Council of Alberta gathers and analyzes information and collaborates with Alberta Health, Alberta Health Services, health professions, academia, and other stakeholders to translate that knowledge into practical improvements to health service quality and patient safety in the healthcare system.

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