



Update on Nursing Home Planning and Aging Strategy – Department of Social Development

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Why This Update?

- Our 2016 report noted the proportion of New Brunswick seniors aged 75 and older will double by 2036.
- Failing to implement nursing home plans and obtain needed services for seniors will result in a crisis, specifically:
 - severe shortage of available placements;
 - growing pressure on hospitals and related costs; and
 - inadequate care for growing number of vulnerable seniors.
- This update is to inform New Brunswickers on progress on our 2016 recommendations and is unrelated to COVID-19.

Overall Conclusions

- We were disappointed to find significant delays in the implementation of two 5-year Nursing Home Plans with limited progress on the 2018-2023 plan.
- Nursing home beds are only one important component to address the influx in demand, however, significant ongoing delays mean the Province is failing to address nursing home capacity demand.
- The Province is not ready for the increase in seniors requiring placement in a residential facility.
- Although a 10-year Aging Strategy containing valuable ideas has been developed in collaboration with Department of Health, it lacks an implementation plan.
- A comparison of actual costs and quality of service of for-profit and not-for-profit operated nursing homes needs to be done.
- The Department of Social Development did not publicly report pertinent information on its progress against the Aging Strategy and the Nursing Home Plans.

What We Found

Significant delays in implementing nursing home plans

- Target dates for new nursing home beds either not set or not being met in two 5-year nursing home plans
- System is failing to address nursing home capacity demand
- 2018-2023 Nursing Home Plan behind schedule by at least two years
- After 10 years and over \$11 million spent on repairs and financial assistance, two homes replaced in Miramichi, with 28 additional beds

Government needs to evaluate actual costs and quality of service of different nursing home models

- Government completed analysis projecting nursing home model selected for 240 new beds scenario in Miramichi would be less costly
- However, 2016 AG recommendation to evaluate the economic benefit from for-profit operated nursing homes has not been done

Lack of implementation plan for Aging Strategy

- Aging Strategy contains valuable ideas
- Inadequate monitoring and evaluation of Aging Strategy's implementation
- Department began setting targets in August 2020 for certain initiatives aligned with Strategy

Limited and inaccurate public reporting on progress

- Department reported 35% of Aging Strategy action items implemented at June 2019, however:
 - many action items are not measurable
 - completion status of some action items inaccurate
- Lack of reporting on progress of 2018-2023 Nursing Home Plan
- Reporting on alternate level of care (ALC) patients initiatives inadequate