



Selecting a Personal Care Home that is right for you

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Selecting a personal care home

Choosing a personal care home for yourself, a family member or friend can be a challenging task. It is important for you, your family members and supporters to all participate in the selection of a home whenever possible. The following information is designed to provide you with guidance in selecting the best personal care home to meet you or your loved one's needs.

What is a personal care home?

A personal care home is a place that provides adults with accommodation, meals, and guidance or assistance with personal care.

Personal care homes can be “for-profit” or “not-for-profit”, but all are privately owned and operated. Residents typically pay the full cost of their own care in personal care homes.



What is personal care?

Personal care is assistance or guidance with activities of daily living. This may include: eating, bathing, dressing, grooming, taking oral medications, using the washroom, mobility and participating in social and recreational activities.

Where can I find a personal care home?

There are personal care homes in many locations in Saskatchewan. You can access a list of personal care homes in your area, including their contact information, by visiting saskatchewan.ca and searching for “personal care homes”.



Call some of the personal care home operators on the list and ask them the questions that you have prepared. After obtaining information about a personal care home, it is important to schedule an appointment to visit the home and meet with the operator.

Visit as many personal care homes as you feel necessary before making a final decision. After visiting each home, consider all the information you have gathered. Select the personal care home that:

- offers the features most important to you or your loved one; and
- can meet you or your loved one's care needs.

What is the difference between the terms “licensee” and “operator”?

The “licensee” is the person or corporation who holds the licence for the personal care home.

The “operator” is the person responsible for the day-to-day operation of the personal care home. The operator may be the same person as the licensee or may be a person hired by the licensee to manage the personal care home.

What should I look for when visiting a personal care home?

- Ask to see the home's licence. This licence must be posted at all times and will list the name of the person or corporation that holds the licence. The name on the licence is the licensee. The licensee is responsible for all of the care provided in the personal care home.
- Look to see what conditions may be listed on the licence. Conditions may sometimes limit a personal care home from providing a certain type of care.
- Ask to see a copy of the rules of the home.
- Explain to the operator the care needs required by you or your loved one. Ensure that these care needs can be met.
- Talk to the operator, staff and residents about the services provided, such as: staff coverage, recreational activities, religious services, transportation, etc.
- Inquire about the experience and training of the operator and staff.
- Ask to see the bedroom and bathroom that you will be using.
- Ask to see a menu plan and inquire about special diets, if needed.
- When you visit the home, take a look around to see what activities residents are doing (for example, playing cards, visiting, etc). Check to see if there are organized activities offered on a regular basis in the home.
- Ask the operator about what it costs to live in the home, what is received in return and if there are extra charges for additional services.

- Observe the home’s atmosphere. Is it a pleasant, happy and comfortable environment?
- Ask the operator for references from former residents or family members of former residents. Call these references and ask them what their experience was with the home.

What about staffing in a personal care home?

Personal care homes provide staffing 24 hours a day.

Homes with 11 or more residents have staff that are awake at night. Homes with 10 or less residents must ensure that the staff are available to residents at night if they need assistance. Staff may or may not be awake throughout the night in homes with 10 or fewer residents.

While some personal care homes do have nurses working in the home, most staff in personal care homes are not nurses. You may want to ask the personal care home licensee questions about the staff that they have working in the home.

What are my rights and privileges?

Every resident in a personal care home has the following rights and privileges according to section 34 (1) of *The Personal Care Homes Regulations*:

- to be treated with kindness and respect by the licensee, staff and other people in the home;
- to tell the licensee or operator about any concerns and to recommend changes to the rules or services in the home;

- to be able to complain to the licensee or operator or to anyone else they choose, including staff from the Ministry of Health if they are not satisfied with aspects of the home without being afraid of repercussions;
- to attend their own religious services or other activities;
- to have privacy;
- to use their own belongings, and to have others use them only if given permission;
- to communicate within the home by telephone or mail in private;
- to have visitors between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. without having to make any arrangements ahead of time;
- to come and go as they like at all reasonable hours with notification given to the operator;
- to be free from any physical punishment, threats, intimidation or abuse; and
- to choose their own physician, dentist, optometrist or other health care professional.

What care needs do you or your loved one have?

Discuss the specific care needs with the operator of the home. It can be uncomfortable talking about some of your specific care needs but it is important that the operator knows what kind of help you need. Once they understand the specific care required, they can determine if they are able to provide safe and appropriate care.

Once you or your loved one moves into a personal care home, the licensee will arrange for an assessment of you or your loved one's care needs. An assessment helps the operator understand what your care needs are and what you need assistance with.

If you have a current assessment it may be helpful to bring it with you to the home when you visit. The information on the assessment can help you or your loved one and the operator decide if your needs can be met in that home.

What is a security deposit?

You may be asked by the operator to provide a security deposit in order to hold a room in a personal care home for a future date. The security deposit requested can be up to \$500. The amount of the security deposit and date you plan to move into the home must be agreed to in writing between you and the operator. The security deposit will be subtracted from the first month's rent upon admission to the home, and recorded in the agreement.

If you decide not to move into the home, the security deposit can be retained by the licensee.

What is an admission agreement?

When you have selected a personal care home, the operator will ask you or your loved one to sign an admission agreement.

An admission agreement is a contract between the licensee of a personal care home and you or your loved one. The agreement puts into writing the care, services and fees agreed upon.

The agreement must be signed by **both** you (i.e., the resident) and the licensee. You will be given an **original** admission agreement document. You may also ask that your supporter be provided with a copy of the agreement too. It is important to keep this document in a safe place.

Ensure the following items are included in the admission agreement:

- resident fees and the amount of notice required for increased rates;
- basic services the home provides and costs of these;
- any extra charges such as the cost of professional care and additional services;
- payment period and method of payment;
- conditions when a refund may be given;
- notice required for termination of the agreement;
- notice required for new rates due to changing care needs;
- rights and privileges of the resident and rules of the home;
- whether the resident or licensee will be responsible for insurance coverage of personal belongings; and
- a description of the room the licensee agrees to provide.

Any changes to the agreement must be made to **both** the licensee's agreement and you or your loved one's agreement. These changes must be initialled by **both** parties and dated.

Do I have to sign the admission agreement right away?

You may want to take the admission agreement home to read before signing it.

The admission agreement should be signed before moving into a personal care home, and no later than seven days after admission.

Read the admission agreement before signing it. You may also want your supporter or lawyer to review it too. Do not sign anything you do not understand.

Questions or concerns?

Do talk with the personal care home operator if you have any questions or concerns.

You can also contact a Personal Care Homes Consultant with the Ministry of Health if you have any concerns or require more information. They can be reached at:

- Regina 306-787-1715
- Saskatoon 306-933-5843
- Or by visiting saskatchewan.ca and searching for “personal care homes”.

Use the chart on the next page to list the personal care homes you visit.

- List the features that are important to you across the top of the chart. These may include: ramp, your specific care needs, etc.
- Record the information about each home on the chart.
- Use the information to help you choose the home that would best meet your needs.



Personal Care Home Name:	Fee					Comments:
<i>Operator A</i>						<i>Nice single room. 5 other residents.</i>

