

Extendicare Report Summary

SHA Quality Care and Safety Review

September 2021

Parkside Extendicare in Regina experienced a severe COVID-19 outbreak in late 2020. As a result, in January 2021 the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, Seniors and Rural and Remote Health wrote to the provincial Ombudsman requesting an investigation and report on the circumstances surrounding the Parkside outbreak.

On August 5, 2021, the Ombudsman released a [report](#) on the investigation. It highlighted multiple failures in infection control efforts at Parkside and a high rate of illnesses and deaths.

A Minister's Directive was then issued, directing the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) to take over the administration of the five long-term care homes owned and operated by Extendicare (Canada), Incorporated. To facilitate that, the SHA assumed operational clinical control of the homes while the assessment took place.

On September 7, 2021, the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) submitted a report to the Minister of Health on Extendicare's five homes in Saskatchewan. The SHA had been instructed to review Extendicare operations in its Saskatchewan homes regarding the Ombudsman's recommendations and to assess compliance with requirements in Saskatchewan's *Program Guidelines for Special Care Homes*.

The review was to:

- determine whether Extendicare (Canada) Inc. is adhering to applicable policies, guidelines, and legislation and to ensure the safety of residents in all Extendicare (Canada) homes in Saskatchewan; and
- assess compliance with the Ombudsman recommendations and the care requirements stipulated under the *Program Guidelines for Special Care Homes*.

The scope of the review included all five Extendicare homes in Saskatchewan. It involved a review of Extendicare governance/policy framework and regional/local leadership practices related to the Ombudsman's recommendations.

Parkside Extendicare (Regina) — 160 long-term care beds

Sunset Extendicare (Regina) — 142 long-term care beds

Elmview Extendicare (Regina) — 46 long-term care beds, 8 short stay beds

Moose Jaw Extendicare (Moose Jaw) — 121 long-term care beds

Preston Extendicare (Saskatoon) — 74 long-term care beds

The review was conducted by an SHA project team overseen by senior leadership.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- Overall, it was observed that corporate governance and policy frameworks in place are robust and in alignment with best practice. There were comprehensive human resource policies for staff training and accountability. However, implementation of some policies and processes at the local/home level was inconsistent.
- There is variation between the homes with regards to pandemic planning and readiness. Pandemic planning requirements include compliance with public health orders, directives and provincial pandemic standards and guidelines.
- Good foundational processes are in place for resident care and safety, which include the areas of resident admission processes, clinical standards, care planning and documentation related to resident care.
- Overall, the homes demonstrated compliance in a number of areas with Saskatchewan's Program Guidelines for Special Care homes.
- There are gaps in thoroughness of pandemic planning, infection control and outbreak management resulting in significant variation in application across the five homes, notwithstanding various Extencicare Infection Protection and Control (IPAC) support resources.
- Four of the five homes displayed stable, knowledgeable and responsive administrative leadership.

CONCLUSIONS

The report outlines some comprehensive processes and guidelines in Extencicare facilities, relating to resident care and safety, staff training and quality improvement. However, compliance and leadership varies between the five Saskatchewan Extencicare homes, with one home having significant gaps. A gap was observed in the areas of communications, lack of standardized processes, including processes related to pandemic planning and response.

Additional gaps observed by the SHA include uncertainty from Extencicare as to the application of the provincial COVID-19 work standards, guidance documents and directives for continuing care in all five Saskatchewan Extencicare homes in relation to Extencicare policies. Extencicare's pandemic policy states where there are provincial requirements, they are to be followed, and identifies a process to incorporate these requirements. There is variance in knowledge and implementation of provincial requirements with the homes, and clear provincial direction and coordination among the homes would support provincial consistency.