

# Policies



**Coalition for  
Seniors and  
Nursing  
Home  
Residents'  
Rights  
“Standing  
Up for**

**You”**

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## **1. Vision- Mission-Purpose-Universal Right**

- a) The Coalition advocates on behalf of all seniors with the government to implement and support affordable and accessible programs that enhance the quality of life for seniors and their families.

## **2. Seniors Aging in Place**

- a) Seniors have a right to remain in their own homes for as long as possible.
- b) The government has a responsibility to support the development of public affordable independent living and assisted living accommodations to allow seniors to support their independence for as long as possible.
- c) Seniors expect to live in an environment that emphasizes dignity, autonomy, participation, equity, and security.
- d) Seniors should have the opportunity to participate actively, creatively, and interestingly in society in their own communities.
- e) Seniors should have access to affordable transportation to accommodate their needs.

## **3. Communication**

- a) The Coalition for Seniors shall maintain communication with all levels of government and supporting organizations.

## **4. Caregivers and Support Workers**

- a) Caregivers should have access to good working conditions, wages, and benefits like other sectors of comparable work to improve and ensure recruitment and retention.
- b) Training shall be provided at no cost to the caregiver.
- c) Caregivers should be replaced when they are out on sick leave, injury, leave of absence or vacation time.
- d) The Coalition advocates that all Nursing Homes and Special Care be designated as not-for-profit.

## **5. Provincial Standards**

- a) The government should establish a Bill of Rights for Special Care Homes and Nursing Homes.
- b) The government should conduct unannounced inspection of Special Care Homes and Nursing Homes.
- c) The reports shall be posted within 30 days on the government website.
- d. This information must be made available to residents and their families.
- e) The government should provide a list of daily activities and make them available to residents and their families.

## 6. Bedside Care in Nursing Homes

- a) That the Hours of care be increased to 4.1 hours per resident per day.

## 7. Advisory Body Minister for Seniors

- a) The Coalition endorses the concept of the Council on Aging which constitutes the foundation for dialogue, action, and direction relative to the challenge of an aging population.
- b) Its composition shall be free from all political partisanship, with public input as to its mandate, structure, and purpose.
- c) It will serve as an independent body, autonomous from government and responsible for advising through a [Policy on Aging](#), innovative ideas, reports, and recommendations to government.

## 8. Amendment to Ombud Act

- a) The Seniors Advocate is an officer of the Legislative Assembly and is independent of government, therefore the act should be amended to reflect decision making power.

## 9. Patient Advocacy Body

- a) The Coalition supports the presence of a Patient Advocate for each region of the province to ensure that the concerns of senior patients in hospitals and Nursing Homes are represented.
- b) That the Patient Advocate be the responsibility of the Regional Health Authority to ensure independence and impartiality.

## 10. Financial Contribution

- a) The cost of Health Care services for Nursing Home residents be the responsibility of the Government.
- b) That the calculation of daily fees for Nursing Home and Special Care Home be based on the individual net income. **Notable: On October 3, 2006, the government changed the means-test to income for Nursing Homes. Liquid financial assets such as savings, investments and family residence were no longer required, daily fees were implemented at \$79 per day per resident.**
- c) The government shall require only the previous year of income tax return to simplify the financial assessment process.
- d) That the Veteran's Disability Pension (including the additional sum paid to the disability pensioner on behalf of the spouse/common-law partner) is not considered income or linked to the service-related injury.
- e) That all residential heating be eligible for the (PST) 8% rebate.
- f) That the rebate amount of \$500 be provided to a household with a net income of \$28,000 or less.

## **11. Endorsement**

- a) The Coalition will not be part of other coalitions. It is comprised of groups and individuals who come together to endorse and promote the shared principles of its members.

## **12. Board Recognition**

- a) The Board may recognize at its ANNUAL General Meeting or at any other meeting a person it considers deserving for an outstanding contribution to the Coalition. The certificate will read as follows:

*“Coalition for Seniors and Nursing Home Residents’ Rights Award presented to (Name of recipient) In recognition for his/ her outstanding contribution to the Coalition. It will be dated and signed by the President.”*

## **13. Government Services and Privatization**

- a) The Coalition opposes privatization of government programs: such as Ambulance NB, Extra Mural Service, heating assistance rebate - thus relinquishing its responsibilities and leaving them to the private sector and /or the not-for-profit charitable organization.

## **14. Property Tax**

- a) That the property tax for seniors sixty-five (65) and over be based on taxable income.
- b.) That the low-income property tax allowance be improved to provide:
  - A \$300 benefit to household with total income taxable income up to \$22,000.
  - A \$200 benefit to household with total income taxable income between \$22,000 and \$25,000
  - A \$100 benefit to household with total amounts between \$25,000 and \$30,000.

## **15. Ambulance Fees**

- a) That the government restore the ambulance service at no charge to all New Brunswickers.

## **16. Medication**

- a) That the government consult with the public to improve the benefits of its seniors' health program administered by Medavie Blue Cross to establish affordable rates and benefits for all seniors
- b) That all over the counter medication be provided at no cost to nursing home residents.
- c) That the co-pay premium for seniors sixty-five and over who receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement be waived.

## **17. Annual User Fees**

- a) That the low-income seniors with an income or less than \$28,000 be exempt from the user fees.

## **18. Minister of State**

- a) That the Minister of State be a full- fledged Minister with a department with sufficient resources and budget including the portfolio of matters pertaining to Seniors.

## **19. Age /Disease "Healthcare Facilities"**

- a) That the government make provision to accommodate residents living in Nursing Homes and Special Care Homes with age/disease be accommodated to address their needs.

## **20. Long Term Care Act**

- a) Government has an obligation to ensure that seniors are given a priority by establishing a Long-Term Care Act that would include all policies affecting seniors.

## **21. Eviction Notices- Discharge**

- a) That all nursing care facilities manage intakes, transfers, and discharge through a unified admissions committee where an operator may bring issues with "problem" residents.
- b) Should the facility be unable to arrange a workable agreement between the operator, resident or next of kin the resident will be placed on a transfer list to a suitable alternative placement providing the resident agrees to the new facility of his or her choice.

## **22. Nursing Care Selection Process**

- a) That the nursing care facilities be legislated to accept residents or seniors on a first come first served basis.

## **23. Translation-Communication**

- a) The Coalition strives to provide translation for its communications wherever possible. When doing so, the Coalition will rely on the competency of volunteers to assist in this regard.

## **24. Home Care - Long Term Care**

- a) That Home Care and Long-term Care (continuum care) be the responsibility of the Department of Health.
- b) That Continuum Care, such as Home Care and Long-Term Care be included in the Canada Health Act.

## **Notable - Historic Summary**

### **Nursing Homes – Assets - Daily Fees**

On April 1, 1997, assets were introduced, and daily fees ranged from \$120 - \$182 per day which varied from home to home, residents who paid privately, paid 5% over daily fees. The assessment included income, family home, car, cottage, woodlot, and real estate.

On January 1, 2005, half of the family liquid (savings) remained with the spouse at home and the family home, cottage, car, woodlot, and real estate were no longer considered, leaving the spouse at home to keep up to \$202 more of the monthly income.

Evidence of two years income tax return, a look back from five (5) years was reduced to two (2) years, residents medication approved by New Brunswick prescription drug program was included in the room and board and request of statement of savings and investment required were still required.

On October 3, 2006, the government changed the means-test to income, statement of savings and investment no longer were required, daily fees were implemented at \$79.00 per day per resident. Daily fees in other provinces range from \$31.92 to \$107.75 based on individual income.

**Whereas** on March 31, 2015, the government announced the removal of the Cap of daily fees of \$113 and no longer exempt liquid financial assets such as savings or investment excluding the family principal residence and;

**Whereas** the government has announced to claw back 7.8 M from senior's assets putting New Brunswick seniors through much stress and anxiety when the department has a budget of 1.1 billion:

**Therefore, Be It Resolved** the Coalition continue to call upon the government to reverse its decision on the asset grab and to call upon other organizations and individuals to support the Coalition's efforts by writing letters and contacting their MLA's requesting that the nursing home fees be based on income only.

***Resolved September 9, 2015, Press Conference announcement by government to remove proposal. Rate remained at \$113 per day per person.***

***Family net income currently being used and under review with SENIORS ADVOCATE office and Social Development***