

Long-Term Care and Assisted Living Regional Strategy: 2025–2029

November 2025



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1. Vancouver Coastal Health Strategic Plan 2024-2029

We wish to acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the traditional and unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

Vancouver Coastal Health is committed to delivering exceptional care to 1.25 million people, including the First Nations, Métis and Inuit, within the traditional territories of the Heiltsuk, Kitasoo-Xai'xais, Lil'wat, Musqueam, N'Quatqua, Nuxalk, Samahquam, shíshálh, Skatin, Squamish, Tla'amin, Tsleil-Waututh, Wuikinuxv, and Xa'xtsa.

Vancouver Coastal Health works collaboratively with the Ministry of Health and other health authority partners to advance our shared goal of a more integrated system of care that focuses on better serving patients, clients and Persons.

Our [renewed 2024-2029 Strategic Plan](#) prioritizes the work we need to do to deliver culturally safe, high-quality and low-carbon care and address persistent health inequities at the same time.

Figure 1. VCH Strategic Plan 2024–2029



2. Engagement

2.1 Engagement: service population

Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) delivers care to nearly 7,400 people who live in Long-Term Care (LTC) Homes and Assisted Living (AL) across Richmond, Vancouver and Coastal communities of care.

An analysis of VCH LTC 2024–25 population data indicates that:

- The majority of people in LTC are frail elderly (65 per cent are over 80 years of age; 27 per cent are over 90 years).
- Though many people move in for short periods at the end of their life, roughly 48 per cent of people live in LTC for two years or more.
- Approximately 59 per cent of people have moderate to severe cognitive impairment, which requires cuing, physical assistance and support for engagement in social and other enjoyable activities.
- About 12 per cent of people have medical complexity and are at risk of serious decline.
- Approximately 30 per cent of people have improved physical functioning, suggesting their health has improved.
- About 41 per cent of people have a decline in physical functioning, suggesting a decline in health and/or lack of engagement in everyday activities.
- Approximately 12 per cent have worsening depression.

An analysis of VCH AL 2024–25 population data indicate that:

- Average age is 83 years.
- Roughly 66 per cent live in AL for two or more years (average length of stay is 4.1 years).
- 15 per cent have a dementia diagnosis.
- 2.4 per cent have moderate to severe cognitive impairment (Cognitive Performance Scale (CPS) 3+).
- 37 per cent have a high or very high Methods for Assigning Priority Levels (MAPLE) score, which is a strong predictor of admission to LTC.
- 11 per cent have a medical complexity and are at risk of serious decline (Change in Status Score (CHESS) Scale 2+).
- Light personal care needs (2.9 per cent have Activities of Daily Living Scale 3+).

2.2 Engagement: commitment to Persons and families

A meaningful strategy must centre and amplify the lived experiences of the people we serve. To ensure LTC and AL strategy reflects the priorities of persons in care and families, we adopted a co-creation approach that amplifies their voices throughout the planning process.

Members of the Regional Resident and Family Council Network played a central role by co-facilitating in-person focus groups and providing feedback on the engagement process.

2.3 Engagement: how we gathered input

To foster inclusive and meaningful engagement, we conducted five open forum focus groups across LTC and AL homes within the VCH region.

In addition, we launched an online survey that was hosted on the VCH Engage website and made available in seven languages to broaden participation and ensure accessibility for diverse communities.

Participants were invited to reflect on three key questions:

1. What matters most to you in Long-Term Care or Assisted Living?
2. Over the next five years, what is one thing you would like to see change?
3. Over the next five years, what is one thing you would like to see remain the same?

This collaborative process has laid a strong foundation for a strategy that is both responsive *and* deeply aligned with the values and aspirations of those who call our LTC and AL communities home.

Figure 2. Photo taken at focus group held May 28, 2024 at Little Mountain Place

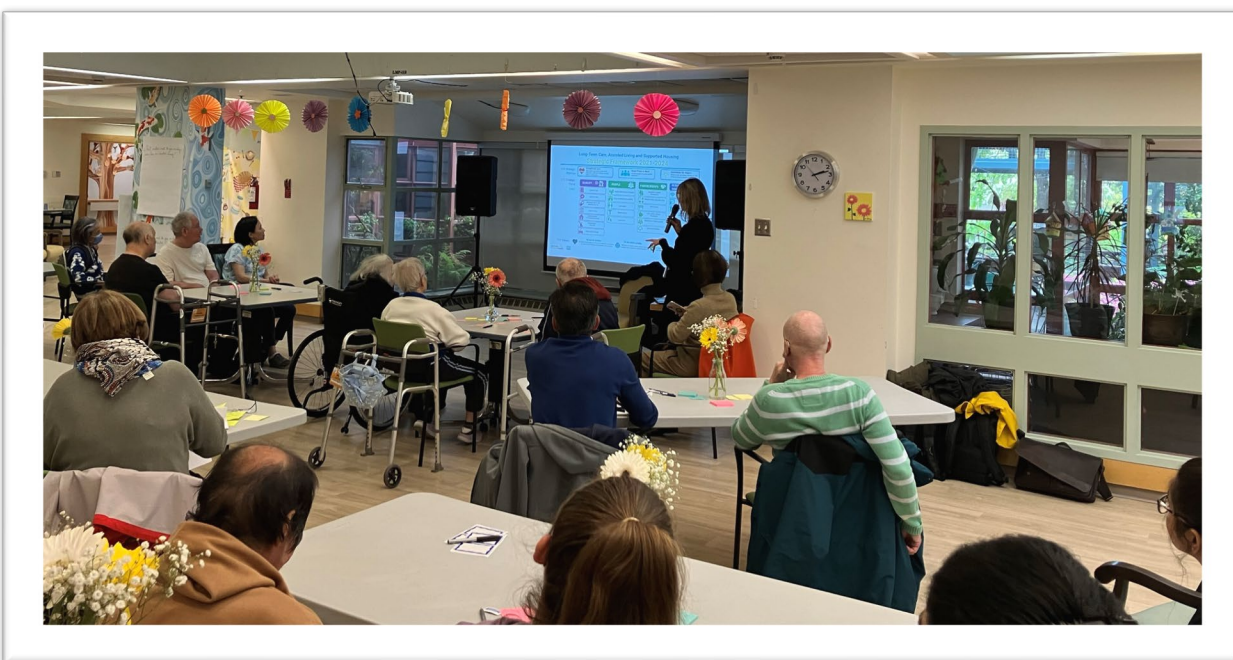
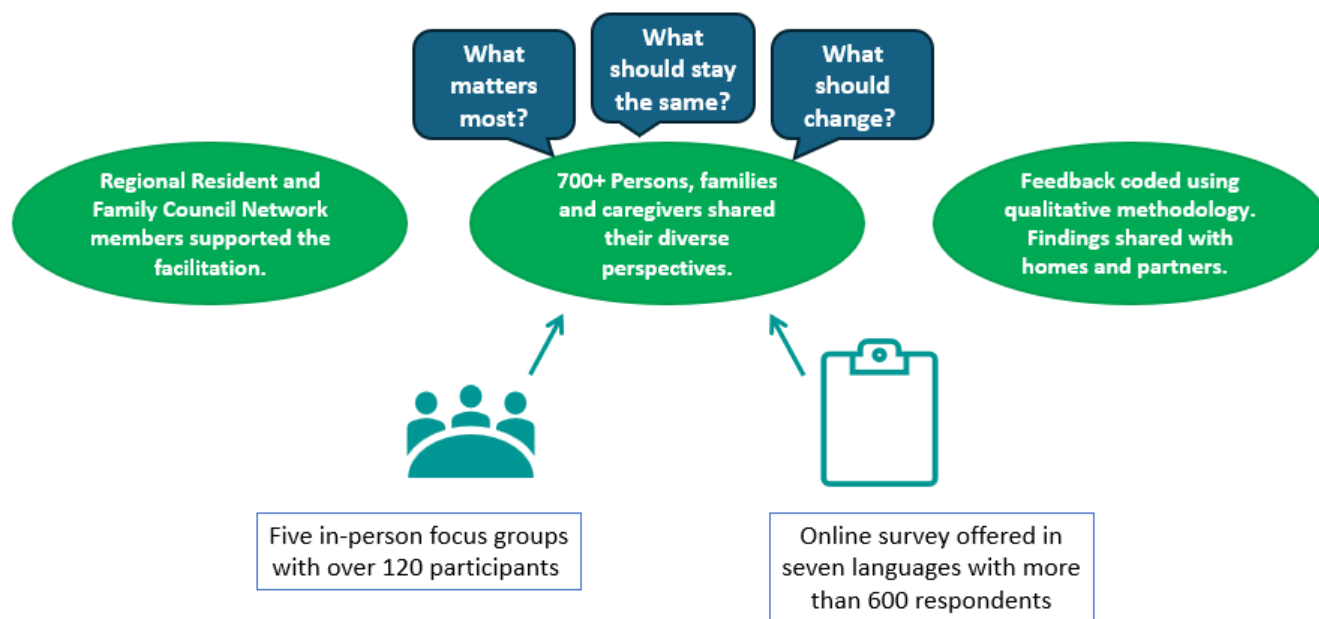


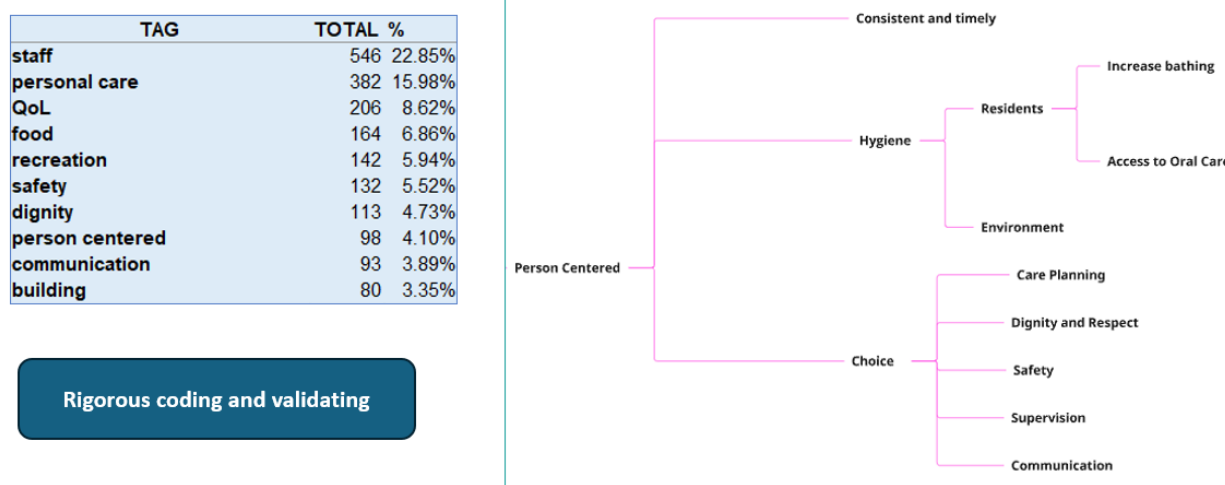
Figure 3. Engagement Process



2.4 Engagement: careful analysis

All feedback was coded using a qualitative analysis methodology to identify recurring words and themes that surfaced key topics. Tags were then tallied to determine the most frequently mentioned priorities. This input was systematically mapped to ensure meaningful integration into the strategic plan.

Figure 4. Example from Coding and validating process



2.5 Engagement: what we heard

More than 700 Persons, families and caregivers shared their diverse perspectives, providing a rich foundation for a five-year roadmap.

What we heard:

What matters most in long-term care and assisted living?

- 1) **Staff:** Having a well-staffed, compassionate and highly trained team.
- 2) **Care:** High-quality, person-centered care that fosters independence.
- 3) **Quality of life:** Supporting physical and mental wellness while creating a home-like environment.
- 4) **Food:** Nutritious, high-quality meals with diverse options.
- 5) **Recreation and activities:** Engaging programs, including music, outdoor activities and mental stimulation.

What should change over the next five years?

- 1) **Staff:** Increase staffing levels, support and compensation, and provide ongoing training.
- 2) **Building:** Upgrade accessibility, amenities and infrastructure.
- 3) **Capacity:** Reduce wait times, expand services and streamline transitions.
- 4) **Food:** Enhance meal quality, diversity and cultural inclusivity.
- 5) **Recreation and activities:** Enhance outdoor activities, mental stimulation and music programs.

What should stay the same over the next five years?

- 1) **Staff:** Retain caring, consistent staff and maintain their availability.
- 2) **Care:** Preserve high-quality, timely person-centered care.
- 3) **Building:** Keep single and/or private rooms, and maintain accessible, well-designed spaces.
- 4) **Recreation and Activities:** Continue outdoor recreational activities, music and engaging programs.
- 5) **Food:** Maintain the current meal quality, variety, and culturally appropriate offerings.

3. Vision and Guiding Principles

3.1 Vision

The LTC and AL vision was developed in 2022 with extensive input and expands on VCH's vision of *Healthy lives in healthy communities* to emphasize the importance of meaningful life experiences, dignity, connection and quality of life:

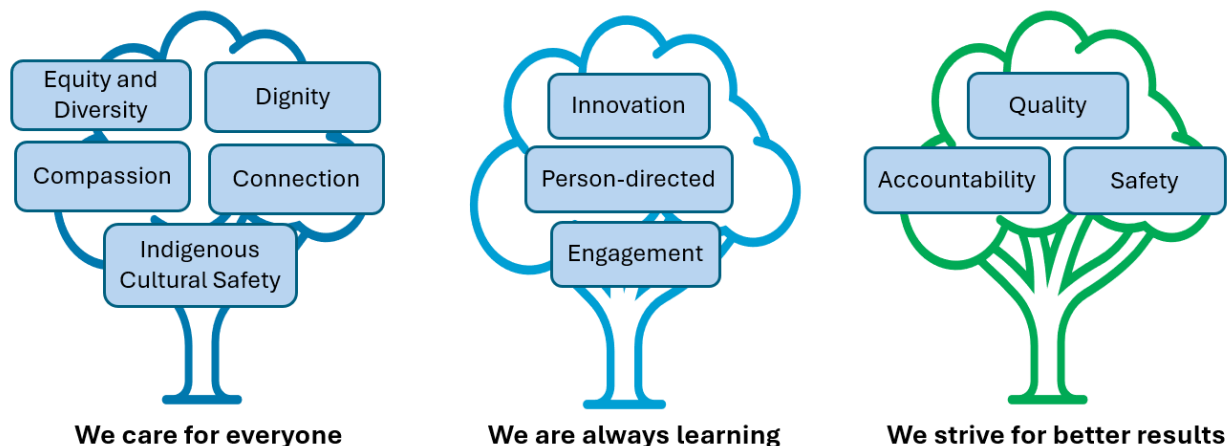
VISION: Living meaningfully in communities with dignity, connection, and quality of life

These concepts are included in our guiding principles.

3.2 Guiding principles

Our guiding principles are rooted in VCH's values and shape decision-making for the LTC and AL population.

Figure 5. Guiding Principles



We care for everyone

- **Equity:** We create an inclusive, welcoming and respectful environment in care homes by ensuring equitable access to resources, encouraging diverse participation, and eliminating discrimination.
- **Dignity:** We respect each person's privacy and support their autonomy.
- **Compassion:** We strive to understand and take meaningful action to uplift the voices of persons in our care.
- **Connection:** We create homes that meet the clinical, social and psychological needs of Persons while fostering a deep sense of belonging. Every person feels valued, connected and part of a community.
- **Indigenous Cultural Safety:** We are committed to reconciliation and learning and providing the best care informed by the history and culture of Indigenous peoples.

We are always learning

- **Innovation:** We strive to introduce new ideas, services or processes to improve care, safety, efficiency and outcomes.
- **Person-directed:** We ensure that people living in LTC homes are active participants in their care, with their goals, needs and preferences driving decision-making.
- **Engagement:** We learn from persons in care and care partners, and they are proactively included in the co-design of services and evaluation of our performance.

We strive for better results

- **Accountability:** We share our performance transparently so that people living in care homes and their care partners can trust and assess the care they receive.
- **Quality:** We uphold a robust quality framework that ensures a high standard of care, prioritizes safety, promotes well-being and delivers a positive experience for persons in care and their care partners. This means that we aim to provide effective, evidence-informed care.
- **Safety:** We support processes that reduce risks, minimize errors, mitigate the impact of harm when it occurs and ensure open communication.

4. Regional Long-term Care and Assisted Living Strategy 2025-2029

Input provided by Persons and families during the engagement campaign along with direction from the Ministry of Health, VCH priorities and leading research in the field have been incorporated into the Regional LTC and AL Strategic plan. This collaborative approach ensures that the plan reflects the voices of those we serve and is grounded in evidence-based practices and provincial health mandates.

In partnership with the VCH Communities of Care (Richmond, Vancouver, Coastal- Rural and Remote), we align with the Ministry of Health Seniors Care Division on priority mandates and policy. Developed together with engagement of person in care and families, these priorities reflect our commitment to supporting communities, guiding care providers and improving quality of life for those we serve.

Regional Long-Term Care & Assisted Living Strategic Plan

VCH Strategic Priorities



Healthy People
Promoting well-being, prevention, and social determinants of health



Exceptional Care
High quality, safe care for the best health in the best setting



Great Place to work
Building a supportive workplace that attracts and grows staff



Innovation for Impact
Advancing care through research and innovation

LTC Guiding Principles



Enablers



Technology



Partnerships



Infrastructure



Advanced Data & Analytics

VISION: Living meaningfully in communities with dignity, connection, and quality of life

LTC & AL Strategic Priorities 2025-2029



Advance Quality Standards

Empower the workforce

Expand in-house medical services

Increase opportunities for wellness

Confirm and share quality metrics

Commitment to innovative research and knowledge translation



Promote Homelike Environments

Guide infrastructure development

Strengthen connections

Improve caregiver consistency

Honour diversity, equity and inclusion

Foster safe space and gender diversity



Foster Indigenous Cultural Safety

Advance Indigenous Cultural Safety

Respect and embed Indigenous knowledge

Access to cultural supports



Enhance Communication & Engagement

Build clear communication standards

Involve Persons & families in decision making



Strengthen Sustainability & Resilience

Optimize financial sustainability

Increase workforce capacity

Enhance operational stability

Support updates in technology

Prepare for climate events



Expand Capacity

Optimize system efficiency

Increase LTC beds

We care for everyone



We believe being caring is at the heart of what we do, caring for our patients, their families, our colleagues, and ourselves



We are always learning

We believe in staying, curious, always open to innovative ideas and ways to improve health care



We strive for better results

We believe in achieving better results across all functions of health care leading to better patient outcomes and improving health care

5. Enablers: factors that support success



6. Acknowledgment

We extend our deepest gratitude to the more than 700 Persons, family members and care partners whose voices and insights helped shape Vancouver Coastal Health's updated Long-Term Care and Assisted Living regional strategic plan. Your contributions were invaluable. We also sincerely thank the Regional Resident and Family Council members and dedicated leaders and staff who made the five in-person focus group sessions a success.