

NEWS RELEASE

November 27, 2019

HQCA releases survey results on the experiences of seniors receiving home care services in Alberta

(*Calgary, AB*) Today, the Health Quality Council of Alberta (HQCA) released the results of its 2018 survey on the experiences of seniors receiving home care services across Alberta. The results are presented in the [Alberta Seniors Home Care Client Experience Survey – Provincial Report](#), published on the HQCA's website. This is the second provincial home care client experience survey conducted by the HQCA, the first survey was completed in 2015.

“An important goal of home care is to support clients to remain at home safely and independently for as long as possible; and, the survey has shown that 77 per cent of clients said Yes home care helped them stay home,” says Andrew Neuner, Chief Executive Officer.

The survey obtained feedback from seniors aged 65 and older, which represents among the largest group of home care clients in Alberta, who are receiving long term supportive or maintenance home care services. With a response rate of 59 per cent, the report captures the experiences of 6,914 senior home care clients.

There were few changes seen in the current results compared to 2015; however, the 2018 results do indicate that the clients' overall home care experience is moving in a positive direction. Clients rated their overall experience in home care at 8.3 out of 10, compared to 8.1 in 2015.

“While the higher overall care rating in the 2018 survey is encouraging and we will continue to monitor this in future home care surveys, the report is also a valuable tool for identifying opportunities for improvement in the delivery of home care services” says Mr. Neuner.

The HQCA conducted an analysis to determine the five survey questions that have the greatest potential to improve the overall home care client experience. If the results to these five questions were to improve, the 2018 overall experience rating of 8.3 would be expected to improve as well. The five questions included topics about care continuity, medication support, and how responsive home care staff were to client needs. The results for these questions include:

- Provincially, 42 per cent of clients reported they were very happy with the number of different personal care staff they had.
- Provincially, 38 per cent of clients said professional home care staff talked with them about the purpose of their medications.
- Provincially, 21 per cent of clients said professional home care staff talked with them about the side effects of their medications
- Provincially, 77 per cent of clients said professional home care staff listened carefully to their wishes and needs.
- Provincially, 56 per cent of clients said professional home care staff gave them choices about how care was provided.

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Based on the results of the five questions the HQCA developed the following actions for improvement:

- Alberta Health Services and contracted home care providers work together to fully understand client's concerns and expectations with care continuity and develop strategies to address these concerns.
- Alberta Health Services consult with professional home care staff and home care clients on what tools and support staff need in order to improve communication about medication-related information with their home care clients.
- Alberta Health Services consult with professional home care staff and home care clients on what tools and support staff need in order to strengthen their relationships with clients, specifically to more carefully listen to clients' wishes and needs, and where possible, provide an opportunity for client engagement and choice in how care is provided and managing client expectations and understanding, when choice may be limited.

"The HQCA has a legislated mandate to promote and improve patient safety and health service quality on a province-wide basis," says Dr. Trevor Theman, Chair, HQCA Board of Directors. "Our goal is for this report to be used as a resource that supports improvements in the quality of home care services provided in Alberta. Listening to the voices of those that receive services is a vital source of information to inform improvement efforts."

The Health Quality Council of Alberta is a provincial agency that pursues opportunities to improve patient safety and health service quality for Albertans. The [Alberta Seniors Home Care Client Experience Survey – Provincial Report](#) survey was created in collaboration with Alberta Health Services and Alberta Health.

The Alberta Seniors Home Care Client Experience Survey Provincial Report and a highlights document are available at <http://hqca.ca/surveys/home-care/>

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