



ISLAND HEALTH

Assisted Living Guide



The decision to move from home to a setting that will provide additional support can be emotional for people and their family and friends. We hope the following information will help explain what Assisted Living is, what services are provided, and how eligibility and placement are determined.



About Assisted Living ≈

Assisted Living is a private living unit in a setting that includes additional supports and services so that residents can maintain independence while ensuring they are safe and supported.

In addition to accommodation, Assisted Living includes daily personal care as well as light housekeeping, meals and activities.

Is Assisted Living right for me?

If your health or safety are at risk in your current home and you could use some help on a daily basis, but can still make decisions for yourself, Assisted Living may be right for you.



Eligibility for Assisted Living ≈

Publicly funded Assisted Living units are in high demand. Placement is based on the urgency of the individual's care needs. To be considered for Assisted Living, clients:

- are at risk if they remain in their current environment;
- have difficulty with meal preparation and housework;
- require daily assistance with personal care such as medications, bathing and dressing;
- are capable of making decisions safely (for example, finding their way around the building, participating in care planning, asking for help if they need it and taking direction in an emergency);
- are able to communicate with staff and others;
- are able to make their way around in familiar places on their own
- are willing to accept assistance with personal care and attend meals in the dining room; and
- do not show any behaviors that could affect the health and safety of others.

Cost of Assisted Living ≈

Assisted Living fees are standardized throughout British Columbia at 70% of the resident's after tax income, based on their Revenue Canada income tax return information. Island Health and BC Housing subsidize the rest.

Because the fee is based on income, residents must file income tax annually. At the end of each year, Island Health uses income tax information provided by the Canada Revenue Agency to review fees. Residents are notified of any changes to monthly fees and changes take effect on January 1st. If taxes are not filed, residents are charged the highest rate.



Couples in Assisted Living ≈

Couples may move together into Assisted Living, as long as one person meets the eligibility criteria.

If the resident who is eligible for Assisted Living needs to move to a setting that provides more care or passes away, the remaining resident will be assessed to see if they qualify to continue to live there. If not, they are welcome to stay for up to six months while they find new accommodations.

Resident Responsibilities in Assisted Living ≈

In Assisted Living, residents are able to maintain their independence and will continue to be responsible for things like:

- providing a security deposit and paying for utilities like hydro, cable, telephone and internet;
- furnishing their unit with their own furniture and personal items and paying for any costs to move their belongings to their new home;
- purchasing personal items such as toiletries;
- buying additional groceries for breakfast and snacks - lunch and dinner are served in the dining room;
- arranging for transportation to medical appointments and getting set up with a community pharmacy to purchase prescription medications or other medical supplies they may require; and
- signing an occupancy agreement and complying with those terms, including giving notice if they will be moving out of their unit.

Health Changes in Assisted Living ≈

If a resident's health deteriorates permanently or their care needs became greater than what Assisted Living can provide, they may need to move to a more appropriate setting. The resident's case manager will work with the resident to help make those arrangements.



Applying for Assisted Living ≈

An individual, family member or friend whose loved one is experiencing difficulties at home and wants to explore care options should begin by calling Island Health's Home and Community Care service. Staff will work with the client and their caregivers to arrange the supports that meet the client's care needs.

If the client and case manager decide that Assisted Living is the best option, together they will complete an Assisted Living Application. Once that is finalized and approved, the client will be considered accepted for Assisted Living.

Choosing an Assisted Living Residence ≈

Island Health's public website has an overview of all the licensed Assisted Living settings on Vancouver Island and surrounding areas. Visit www.viha.ca. When considering Assisted Living, clients should think about the neighbourhood in which they want to live, how close they will be to family and friends, and access to shopping and transportation. Once they've narrowed down their search, they can talk to their case manager to select the most appropriate residence based on their needs. Clients can also contact the site operator to arrange a tour.

Moving Into Assisted Living

Assisted Living units are in high demand. The time it takes for an appropriate unit to become available varies and clients with the most urgent need will be placed first.

When a unit becomes available in any of the client's preferred settings, the case manager will contact the client. If the client does not wish to take the first unit that becomes available, they may refuse one time. However, if a client refuses a second time, it will indicate that their need for Assisted Living is not urgent and they will no longer be considered accepted for Assisted Living.

Clients may reapply if their circumstances change.

Making the Most of Assisted Living

Most Assisted Living residents find that when the work of cooking, shopping and cleaning is done for them, they have more time and energy to create connections for new friendships and activities.

Three things residents can do to make the most of their new community in Assisted Living are to:

- do as much as they can for themselves for as long as they are able;
- stay involved with their family and friends;
- get involved with their new community.

Remember that it takes time to settle into a new home. Clients should expect some ups and downs after moving in.



More Information About Assisted Living

For more information and to explore options around subsidized Assisted Living, check www.viha.ca or contact the Home Health Office in your community:

South Island

*All communities south of Mill Bay, including Greater Victoria, the Southern Gulf Islands and west to Port Renfrew, call:
250.388.2273 or toll-free: 1.888.533.2273*

Central Island

*All communities from Mill Bay to Deep Bay, including Gabriola Island, and from Parksville on the east coast to beyond Tofino/Ucluelet on the west coast, call:
250.739.5749 or toll-free: 1.877.734.4101*

North Island

*All communities north of Deep Bay including the Mt. Waddington Regional District and the mainland area adjacent to it, call:
250.331.8570 or toll-free: 1.866.928.4988*

