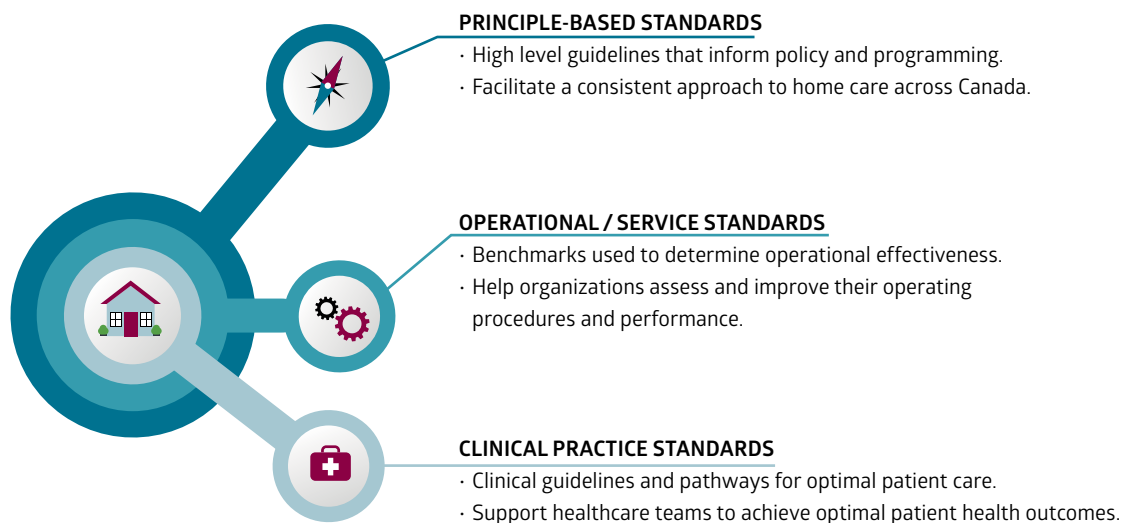


A Framework for National Principle-Based Home Care Standards

HIGH QUALITY HOME CARE should be universal, no matter where it is being delivered, who is delivering it or who is receiving it. Canada currently does not have a national legislative framework for home care. In response to the increasing demand for and rapid growth in home care services, there is a clear need for national home care standards to support equitable access to high-quality home care services across the country. This Framework is the result of extensive consultation with home care policy planners, providers, clients and caregivers to define the essential elements of national principle-based home care standards.

Principle-based home care standards provide a common reference for the development and implementation of home care policy and programs across the country. While standardization encourages consistency, it does not imply uniformity. Based on the widely adopted Harmonized Principles for Home Care,¹ the standards articulate the fundamentals of publicly funded home care while recognizing the uniqueness of provincial and territorial programs. Principle-based home care standards reinforce operational/service and clinical standards by providing a high-level construct that links policy, programming and frontline service delivery. Together, standards support the achievement of patient-centred home care that is accessible, accountable, evidence-informed, integrated and sustainable.

ALIGNMENT OF STANDARDS



1. The Harmonized Principles for Home Care are fundamental value statements that reflect publicly funded home care across Canada while respecting unique jurisdictional differences.

Features of Principle-Based Home Care Standards

This Framework sets out the fundamentals that should be considered when creating national principle-based home care standards.

VISION OF HOME CARE

Home care is an essential part of an integrated health system that provides high-quality, patient- and family-centred care for older adults living with frailty; those with complex chronic disabling conditions; patients with acute and rehabilitative health care needs; and individuals at the end of life. Accessible, responsive services enable individuals to safely receive care in their homes and preserve their dignity and quality of life.

GOALS OF PRINCIPLE-BASED HOME CARE STANDARDS

National principle-based home care standards establish a consistent foundation for publicly funded home care. They support the planning and delivery of patient-centred home care that is accessible, accountable, evidence-informed, integrated and sustainable. Adoption and application of principle-based home care standards will:

- Set the benchmark for high-quality home care
- Inform home care policies, programming and service delivery standards
- Facilitate the identification and sharing of promising practices

OBJECTIVES OF PRINCIPLE-BASED HOME CARE STANDARDS

National principle-based home care standards will impact policies and programs to ensure the following:

- **Person and family-centred care** that is built on assessments of the needs and strengths of patients and caregivers, as well as shared decision-making through effective communication.
- **Accessible care** that is responsive and reliable, and leverages technology where appropriate.
- **Accountable care** through tracking and reporting on common performance indicators.
- **Evidence-informed care** by supporting clinicians to use their expertise, patient experience and best available research in practice and care decisions.
- **Integrated care** that optimizes health care resources and enables seamless transitions across home care, primary care, acute care and long-term care.
- **Sustainable care** developed through effective resource, people and community planning.

OUTCOMES OF PRINCIPLE-BASED HOME CARE STANDARDS

National principle-based home care standards will result in:

- Enhanced person- and family-centred care
- Increased accountability in the home care sector and a positive impact on the broader health care system
- Greater consistency and equity across Canada and within jurisdictions

GUIDELINES FOR CREATION AND ADOPTION

- The patient and family caregiver experience must be heard, both in the co-creation and dissemination of the standards.
- Simplicity and flexibility are essential to respect jurisdictional autonomy and distinctiveness.
- Collaboration within and across different stakeholder groups responsible for creating and implementing home care policies and programs is necessary to ensure clear alignment with policy, administration and frontline practice.
- The standards must be responsive to evolving health and social care systems to support multiple applications and adoption.
- Effective dissemination, alignment with operational/service standards, implementation support and monitoring application are key to success.

Core Elements of Principle-Based Home Care Standards

For each of the six Harmonized Principles, stakeholders identified key strategies that must be addressed through a national standard to achieve the prioritized actions. These key strategies set the research questions for the systematic review and evaluation that the national standards will be developed upon.

Home Care Principle	Core Actions	Research Questions
<p>PERSON- AND FAMILY-CENTRED CARE <i>Patients and their carers are at the centre of the planning and delivery of care.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Acknowledge individuals' and carers' unique strengths and engage them as partners in care. · Respect and address the emotional, physical, mental, environmental and cultural needs of individuals and their carers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · What home-based assessment tools and protocols are used to determine the needs and strengths of patients and carers? · What conversation strategies and tools effectively support patient and carer shared decision-making?
<p>ACCESSIBLE CARE <i>Patients and their carers have equitable and consistent access to appropriate care.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Provide responsive and consistent care delivery among providers and across jurisdictions. · Meet the unique needs of individuals and their carers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · What models support effective home care in urban vs. rural settings? · How does technology facilitate access to home care?
<p>ACCOUNTABLE CARE <i>Patient, provider and system outcomes are managed, met and reported.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Use performance metrics and clinical outcomes to inform planning and delivery. · Report service delivery and outcome metrics in a user-friendly way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · How are effective performance indicators for home care developed and used? · What elements need to be considered for effective reporting of home care performance and outcomes?
<p>EVIDENCE-INFORMED CARE <i>Patients receive care that is informed by clinical expertise, personal values and best available research evidence.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Collect and apply research evidence, provider expertise and individual experience. · Use standardized tools and methodology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · How are clinicians supported to make evidence-informed decisions? · What strategies are effective in measuring patient and carer experience?
<p>INTEGRATED CARE <i>Patients' needs are met through coordinated clinical and service-level planning and delivery involving multiple health and social care providers and organizations.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Optimize system resources and seamless navigation through care coordination. · Build strong foundational partnerships between home care, primary care and acute care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · What are the core elements needed for successful integrated care models that include home care, primary care and acute care?
<p>SUSTAINABLE CARE <i>Patients whose needs can reasonably be met in the home will receive the services and support to do so.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Plan and manage health human resource and social capacity planning. · Use current and future population needs in strategic policy and system planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · How are community resilience and human resource planning being used to predict future demand for and optimization of home care delivery?

Consultative Process to Create a Framework for Principle-Based Home Care Standards

Creation of the Framework for principle-based home care standards was predicated on several influential initiatives led by the Canadian Home Care Association (CHCA) in consultation with home care stakeholders across the country.

2013–15 HARMONIZED PRINCIPLES FOR HOME CARE

The CHCA used a validated framework of research, consultation and evaluation to develop the Harmonized Principle for Home Care to fill a gap identified by stakeholders across Canada. The principles were developed using a literature review; consultations involving over 350 stakeholders representing government policy planners, administrators, service providers, researchers and patients; and an E-Delphi review process. Launched in 2014, the Harmonized Principles for Home Care reflect the shared values of publicly funded home care programs. Recognized by governments and home care providers across the country, home care strategies demonstrate consistency and alignment with the principles. The principles reinforce quality and safety standards from both Accreditation Canada's Qmentum program and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities' Aging Services.

2016 COLLECTIVE NEED FOR NATIONAL HOME CARE STANDARDS

In response to the federal government's targeted investment in home care, the CHCA, the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) and the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) worked together to develop Better Home Care: A National Action Plan. The Action Plan incorporated the ideas and expertise of over 340 individuals representing all levels of government, health administration organizations, home care providers, home care recipients, doctors, nurses, allied health care providers, patients and caregivers. One of the main gaps consistently identified by stakeholders and reflected in the final recommendations was the need for national home care standards to support consistent equitable access to home care across the country. Additionally, during two meetings with the federal health minister and the federal Health Accord secretariat team, national home care standards were identified as essential in achieving better home care.

2017 A FRAMEWORK FOR NATIONAL HOME CARE STANDARDS

The first step in addressing the clear need for national home care standards was the creation of a framework to define the scope, application and development process. This work, led by the CHCA, included a comprehensive engagement process to seek input from home care leaders across the country. Experts from government, service providers, researchers, health care administration organizations and NGOs were involved in the process. The approach involved multiple data collection methods including a targeted interview format for Quebec stakeholders (n=25), three focus groups (n=75) and two rounds of online surveys (n=144), resulting in a clear consensus. Health ministries in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Yukon have specifically expressed support for principle-based home care standards.

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The Canadian Home Care Association (CHCA), incorporated in 1990, is a national not-for-profit membership association representing home care stakeholders from governments, health authorities, local health integration networks, service providers, and equipment and technology companies. The CHCA advances excellence in home care through leadership, awareness, advocacy and knowledge.

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