National Standards for Long-Term Care: The art of the possible?
https://policybase.cma.ca/link/policy14383

**POLICY TYPE**  
Policy endorsement

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**TOPICS**  
Population health, health equity, public health  
Health systems, system funding and performance

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**INTRODUCTION**

This policy endorses national standards to improve the care capacity of Canada’s long-term care system. The current serious level of concern and demand for services by older adults, as well as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, has highlighted the need for a comprehensive and consistent approach to long-term care across the country. The Canadian Medical Association (CMA) and its Council have been at the forefront of advocating for these standards to ensure that all Canadians have access to safe, effective, and equitable long-term care.

**OVERVIEW**

The National Standards for Long-Term Care: The art of the possible? policy outlines a set of principles and standards aimed at enhancing the quality, accessibility, and patient-centered care in long-term care facilities across Canada. These standards are designed to address a range of issues, including staffing ratios, training requirements, and comprehensive health services.

**STANDARDS**

1. **Patient-Centered Care:** Emphasizes the importance of involving residents and their families in decisions about care planning.
2. **Staffing:** Ensures that facilities have adequate staffing levels to provide quality care and support.
3. **Physical Environment:** Promotes safe and comfortable living spaces for residents.
4. **Nutrition and Diet:** Ensures access to nutritious meals and resources to support healthy eating.
5. **Pharmaceutical Care:** Guarantees access to necessary medications and support for medication management.
6. **Safeguards:** Minimizes the risk of physical and psychological harm.
7. **Staff Development:** Promotes continuous learning and development for staff.
8. **Infection Control:** Implements effective strategies to prevent the spread of infections.
9. **Quality Improvement:** Encourages ongoing evaluation and improvement of care processes.
10. **Communication:** Facilitates open and clear communication between residents, families, and staff.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

The implementation of these standards requires a collaborative effort between policy-makers, healthcare providers, and community stakeholders. The CMA will continue to advocate for the adoption and enforcement of these standards to ensure the highest quality of care for all long-term care residents in Canada.

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**Conclusion**

The National Standards for Long-Term Care: The art of the possible? policy is a significant step forward in ensuring that all Canadians receive the care they need and deserve. By endorsing these standards, the CMA reiterates its commitment to improving the health and well-being of older adults and their families across the country.