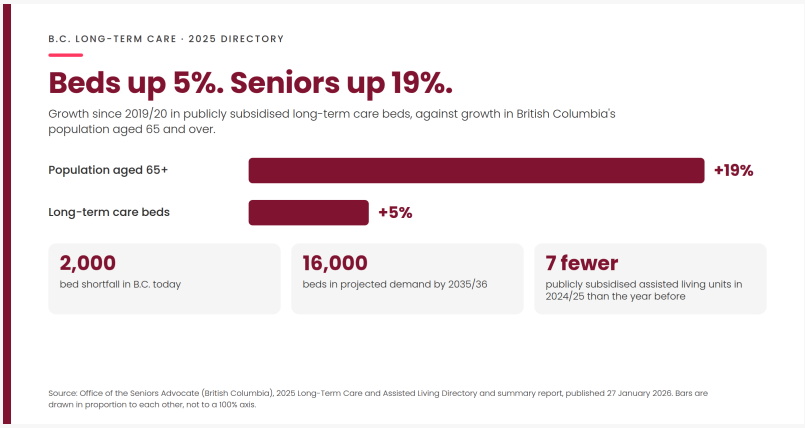
B.C.'s Long-Term Care Capacity Is Falling Behind Its Seniors Population, New Provincial Data Shows

Long-term care beds grew 5% since 2019/20 while B.C.'s 65+ population grew 19%, provincial data shows — and the workforce gap extends beyond clinical roles.



Long-term care beds grew 5 per cent since 2019/20 while B.C.'s 65+ population grew 19 per cent. Source: Office of the Seniors Advocate, 2025 Long-Term Care and Assisted Living Directory, 27 January 2026.

VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA, September 24, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- British Columbia's long-term care capacity is not keeping pace with the population it serves, according to data released by the Office of the Seniors Advocate — and the gap is increasingly a workforce question as much as a building one.

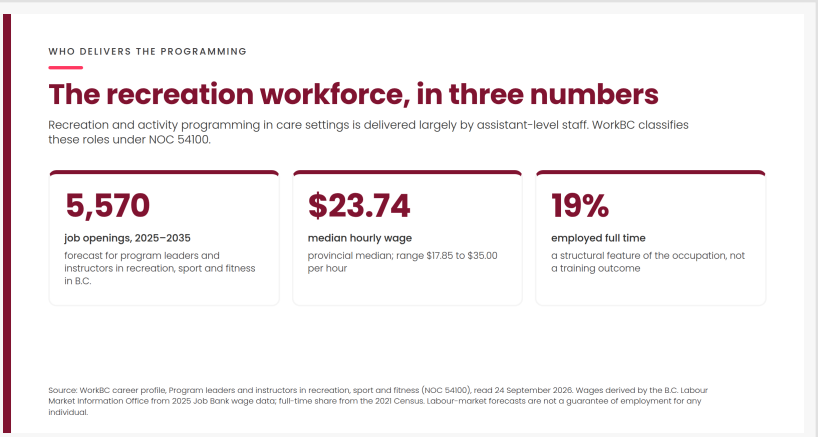
The Office's 2025 Long-Term Care and Assisted Living Directory, published January 27, 2026, covers 301 long-term care facilities and 133 assisted living residences. Its summary report records a 5 per cent increase in long-term care beds since 2019/20, against a 19 per cent increase in the population aged 65 and over across the same period. There were seven fewer publicly subsidised assisted living units in 2024/25 than the year before.

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>
> *Dr. Mohammad Baten, President and CEO, Edison College*

The Office states that B.C. faces a 2,000-bed shortfall today, and that the gap widens by more than 700 per cent against the Ministry of Health's projected demand of 16,000 long-term care beds by 2035/36. The province's senior population is projected to grow a further 26 per cent over the next decade.

"Government's own data shared in our report last July shows 16,000 more long-term care beds will be needed over the next decade and as of today, the Province has no plan to meet this

demand," said Dan Levitt, B.C. Seniors Advocate, in the Office's January statement.



WorkBC forecasts 5,570 openings to 2035 in the occupational group that includes seniors' activity roles — with fewer than one in five working full time. Source: WorkBC career profile, NOC 54100.

Beds require staff, and not only clinical staff. Recreation and activity programming — the daily social, cognitive and leisure activity that shapes quality of life in a care home — is delivered largely by assistant-level workers. WorkBC forecasts 5,570 job openings between 2025 and 2035 for program leaders and instructors in recreation, sport and fitness, the occupational group that includes seniors' activity roles, with a provincial median hourly wage of $23.74 and a typical entry requirement of a high school diploma. WorkBC also reports that only 19 per cent of workers in the group are employed full time, a structural feature of the occupation that job seekers should weigh.

"The public conversation about seniors care is mostly about beds and clinical hours, and those matter," said Dr. Mohammad Baten, President and CEO of Edison College. "But a resident's day is also made up of conversation, music, movement and activity, and that work is done by trained people. When capacity is stretched, quality-of-life programming is often the first thing to thin out."

Edison College's therapeutic recreation activity assistant certificate is a 23-week, 462-hour program comprising 20 weeks of distance theory and a three-week, 90-hour supervised practicum in Victoria, B.C. Coursework covers person-centred care, interpersonal communication, lifestyle and leisure education, and a practical approach to dementia, and includes FoodSafe Level 1, Standard First Aid with CPR Level C, and the Provincial Violence Prevention Certificate. The program has been reviewed and approved by the Private Training Institutions Regulatory Unit of British Columbia's Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills.

Admission requires a high school diploma or equivalent, or mature student status at 19 or over. StudentAid BC funding is available to eligible students, and Edison College partners with Windmill Microlending, which provides loans of up to $15,000 to eligible newcomers to Canada.

Edison College is a private training institution based in Victoria, British Columbia, offering career-focused certificate and diploma programs across health, business and technology fields, delivered online and in hybrid formats.

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