Emergency Preparedness and First Aid

Sections 25-28 and Schedule B of the Assisted Living Regulation require operators to develop an emergency response plan and ensure through its planning and staff training that staff and residents are ready for emergencies, including first aid and CPR.

First Aid

What does the Assisted Living Regulation say about first aid?

The Assisted Living Regulation requires that operators ensure residents have access to an employee with a valid first aid and CPR certificate at all times. What access looks like can vary between residences. Some important considerations for operators are:

- Calling 911 is NOT appropriate access to first aid and CPR.
  - It may be necessary in some places that a number of employees have a valid first aid and CPR certificate to ensure access.
- How is this residence organized? For example, is there a staff person in one building easily able to get to a neighbouring building to administer first aid or CPR when required?
- Each place unique – have to look at own residence to determine how to do this as an operator.

If you need assistance in discussion what is the best first aid and CPR options for your residence, please contact the assisted living registry at Hlth.assistedlivingregistry@gov.bc.ca and an investigator will contact you to assist you in this process.
The Assisted Living Regulation will always be the best place to find the most up-to-date information about first aid requirements.

**Why is a Level 2 of CPR required?**

The Assisted Living Registry consulted with first aid providers in B.C. to determine what was the appropriate first aid and CPR skill requirements for assisted living residences.

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**Emergency Preparedness**

**What are an operator’s responsibilities related to emergency preparedness?**

An operator is responsible for:

- Creating an emergency response plan;
- Ensuring all employees are trained in the implementation of the emergency response plan, including the use of emergency equipment; and
- Ensuring emergency measures and equipment are in place throughout the residence.

**What is required in an emergency response plan?**

Each emergency response plan should include:

- Emergency procedures to be followed, to mitigate, respond to and recover from an emergency;
- A clear chain of command, that is, who will assume leadership at any given time given the staff on duty at that time;
- Procedures to follow in an emergency drill and how often to conduct a drill;
- Conditions when an evacuation is necessary versus conditions when it would be better to shelter-in-place;
- Evacuation procedures, including routes and exits, specific procedures for high-rise buildings
- Procedures for assisting residents, visitors and employees to evacuate, including those who need extra support;
- A pre-arranged plan for where residents will go if evacuated, i.e. an agreement with a neighbourhood location that it can be used as an evacuation site;
- A means of accounting for residents and employees after an evacuation;
- Procedures for taking direction from Provincial Emergency Planning when a community emergency occurs such as a forest fire or flood in the community.
- A description of how residents will continue to receive adequate hospitality services and assisted living services during and following an emergency.
- The plan needs to be reviewed and revised when there is a structural change to the residence; or if the support requirements of residents change significantly.

What emergency measures and equipment need to be in place?

Emergency measures include:

- Emergency exits, windows you can exit through and an emergency drill system appropriate to residents’ needs and capabilities;
- The posting of evacuation procedures and a diagram of emergency exits in common areas and near exits;
- Reliable communication equipment, i.e. a cell phone or a satellite phone in remote areas, that is accessible to employees;
- Fire protection equipment, such as fire extinguishers, that is inspected, tested and maintained as per the manufacturer’s guidelines; and
- Conducting emergency drills.

Is there a standard emergency response plan available for operators?

No, there is no standard emergency preparedness package available, as each response plan is unique to each residence. The plan must be specific to the residence, the unique needs of each resident population, the community and the specific assisted living services you provide to residents.
Some resources to assist you in developing your emergency response plan include:

- [Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery BC](#)
- [How to Prepare an Emergency Response Plan for Your Small Business](#), by WorkSafe B.C. businesses.

**The Assisted Living Regulation states we must be prepared to address an opioid overdose. Is this needed in the Seniors and Persons with Disabilities class?**

It is an operator’s responsibility to assess if your population is at-risk in any assisted living residence. Two resources to help you include:

- [Naloxone Risk Assessment Tool](#) for organizations
- [Toward the Heart](#), a harm reduction strategy and overdose prevention site of the BC Centre for Disease Control.