

# Provincial Standards For Registered Assisted Living Supportive Recovery Services (2011): Frequently Asked Questions

September 2021

---

Here are some frequently asked questions and answers to some of the most common questions related to the new [Provincial Standards For Registered Assisted Living Supportive Recovery Services](#) and the [Standards Implementation Resources](#).

**Please access the online version of this FAQ, available [here](#) to ensure you have the most current information available.**

## 1. What are the Provincial Standards and how are they different than the existing regulations?

- The [Assisted Living Regulation](#) sets out the mandatory health and safety requirements that all Assisted Living services are expected to follow.
- The Province's Assisted Living Registry has enhanced oversight powers to ensure the health and safety of residents, including the ability to conduct routine monitoring inspections and act where there is an immediate risk to the health or safety of a resident.
- The Assisted Living Registry only monitors for regulatory requirements and does not monitor services for compliance with the 2021 Standards
  
- The [Standards](#) expand on the regulatory requirements detailed in the Assisted Living Regulation to provide guidelines that focus on promoting best/wise practices in the areas of health and safety, quality evidence-based service delivery, cultural safety, and capacity building for registered supportive recovery services.
- The Standards follow a client's journey through a supportive recovery service and focus on providing operators with required elements and guidance for enhanced practice. Key areas of focus include:
  - Defining supportive recovery services within BC
  - Requirements for staffing including training and ongoing professional development
  - Emphasis on the importance of linkages between supportive recovery and other health and social sector services, including primary care
  - Expectations for culturally safe programming and cultural awareness
  - Guidance for delivery of programming that is guided by evidence and best practices
  - Requirements to support transitions into and out of supportive recovery residences
  - Guidance on evaluation and quality improvement for operators.

## **2. Who do the Standards apply to? Are they a requirement?**

- The 2021 Standards apply to **all** supportive recovery services **registered** with the Assisted Living Registry.
- The standards supersede the 2011 Provincial Standards for Adult Residential Substance Use Services with respect to the provision of registered supportive recovery services.
- Operators are encouraged to adopt the standards into their service.
- Health Authority Contracted services will be expected to comply with the Standards by March 2023.

## **3. Why did the Province develop Provincial Standards for Registered Assisted Living Supportive Recovery Services?**

- Registered supportive recovery operators are providing programming and supports in an increasingly complex sector to individuals with diverse substance use recovery and wellness needs; dedicated standards recognize the unique context in which registered supportive recovery services operate.
- The standards build-off previous work to support sector capacity and increase overall service quality, by bringing together emerging evidence, best/wise practice and the expertise of sector partners, operators, people with lived experience and families to offer practical guidance for operators in a way that can be implemented in a variety of service settings.
- The introduction of the standards is another opportunity to enhance the sector, improve sector capacity and support operators to provide a diverse offering of quality programming and supports.

## **4. Who decided what the standards should be?**

- The standards draw from evidence-based research in substance use treatment and recovery and were informed by operators, Indigenous partners, persons with lived experience, their families and substance use clinicians and experts.
- The standards respond to feedback from sector partners, and the public regarding the need for person-centered approaches that offer practical guidance that can be implemented in a variety of service settings. Using the journey of a person participating in the service the standards do this by placing the experience of the person at the centre.
- The standards focus on the principles of promoting culturally safe care, emphasize relationships, and encouraging person-centered approaches that are strengths and recovery based.

## **5. Why does the province support a single standard approach to medication, when there are diverse approaches within the sector.?**

- People may require medication for a number of reasons and the standard ensures that a person receives help in accessing medical care and their prescribed medications whatever the need may be.
- This standard provides guidance to support people to continue to take prescribed medications that support their health, wellbeing, and goals for recovery, regardless of a services approach and model.

- The standard is intended to provide flexibility to operators and ensure that clients have enough information to determine if the service is a good fit for their medical needs.
- In the context of the current poisoned drug crisis, it is critical to recognize and follow provincial guidance for the treatment of opioid use disorder in BC.
- This standard reflects the important role that supportive recovery services have in the continuum of care and promotes safety and equitable access to services for people who benefit from medication-assisted treatment as a part of their recovery journey.

**6. Is there opportunity to provide feedback or revise the standards?**

- The formal period for revision has passed, but we want to hear what is working and expect operators to reach out to health authority contract managers and/or the province if there are specific examples of issues that arise or areas that require more guidance.
- While the standards already reflect significant feedback and perspectives that were informed by operators, people with lived and living experience, Indigenous service providers, health authorities and clinicians along the development process, we continue to look for opportunities to seek input for future opportunities.
- For example, a training resource is currently in development and your questions and feedback will help to inform the content of that course.
- If you have concerns about implementation, evaluation and monitoring, and/or suggested topics for the training tool, please feel free to email: [Holly.Clow@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Holly.Clow@gov.bc.ca) and [Bethany.Estiverne@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Bethany.Estiverne@gov.bc.ca)

**7. Are there resources such as funding and training to help organizations and operators implement the standards?**

- There is currently no additional funding available to support implementation of the standards.
- The implementation resources including an organizational self-assessment tool are intended to support operators to identify areas where they are currently meeting or exceeding the Standards and offer additional resources in areas such as cultural safety and humility, program evaluation, and forms.
- As a first step, the Ministries of Health and Mental Health and Addictions are working together to develop a training resource for operators and staff which will support implementation of the Standards and focus on areas such as cultural safety, trauma-informed practice, and self-care for staff.

**8. Is the province developing evaluation tools and methods for contracted providers to ensure the standards are being followed appropriately?**

- We are looking into what further supports are needed to build consistent implementation across the province.
- We are also interested in ideas from operators and Health Authorities to support evaluative approaches, given that Health Authorities already have contract monitoring practices in place.

- To support this process, please reach out to health authority contract managers and/or the province if there are specific examples of issues that arise or areas that require more guidance.

#### 9. Where can I find out more information?

- For more information on the **Assisted Living Regulation** please visit: [Assisted Living Regulation \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/assisted_living_regulation)
- For more information on the **Standards** please visit: [Provincial Standards for Registered Assisted Living Supportive Recovery Services \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/assisted_living_supportive_recovery_services)
- For more information on the **Implementation Resources**: [Provincial Standards for Registered Assisted Living Supportive Recovery Services: Implementation Resources \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/assisted_living_supportive_recovery_services/implementation_resources)
- If you have further questions, please email initial concerns about implementation, evaluation and monitoring, and suggested topics for the training tool to:  
[Holly.Clow@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Holly.Clow@gov.bc.ca) and [Bethany.Estiverne@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Bethany.Estiverne@gov.bc.ca)