

RESIDENT CARE AIDE

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A compilation organized
by TQM Consulting in association with
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Introduction¹

Do you want a career that involves caring for other people? Under the direction of nurses, hospital staff and physicians, Resident Care Aides (RCAs) assist in the basic care of residents. They are employed in hospitals, long-term care facilities, group homes, home support, and community care. Individuals in this field require physical stamina and strong interpersonal skills to carry out the regular duties associated with this occupation. Sensitivity and patience are also crucial qualities. RCAs have excellent observational skills. They should be able to adapt to constantly changing environments and carefully follow direction, policy and procedure. Resident Care Aides support clients with maintaining daily care needs and/or developing new life skills in a variety of settings. These workers usually work one on one with individuals who do not have the capacity to care for themselves. The objective of a Resident care aide is to help the client develop essential skills to assist them with daily functioning, while overlooking their health and safety. Whatever the client need, helping people offers a challenging and rewarding career. Resident Care Attendants can be employed by the following:

- Adult Day Health Centre
- Assisted Living Facilities
- Complex Care Facilities
- Private Care Practice
- Dementia Care Units
- Home Health Care Agencies
- Mental Health Setting

Did You Know?²

- The provincial government, through BC Housing, will provide operating subsidies of \$6.4 million over 35 years with institutions such as Bedford Manor.
- In 2005 public spending on health care totaled \$12.8 billion in BC. This includes costs of running hospitals, paying doctors fees and related health care professionals.
- 90% of seniors visit a doctor at least once a year. 14% are hospitalized for various reasons and 15% receive home care. All of this means that the demand for health care and other support services is large and growing in BC.
- Between 1991 & 2001, the population aged 80 and over soared 41% to 932,000. It is expected to increase an additional 43% from 2001 to 2011 and by then will have surpassed an estimated 1.3 million.
- Within the past decade, more than half a dozen senior's living facilities have opened in Kamloops alone. In the Thompson Cariboo Shuswap region a minimum of 235 additional care aides were required just to meet this growing need.



¹ This section includes information taken from Career Cruising 2006 Internet Website, www.careercruising.com. The information taken has been slightly altered by the Kamloops Work Search Centre staff for readability.

² This information was taken from the following websites: www.12.statcan.ca, www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca and www.guidetobceconomy.org, accessed Jan. 2010.

Education / Training³

To work in this field some secondary school education, a criminal record check, and a tuberculosis screening are required. In some settings, a high school diploma or previous experience may also be required. Completion of a Resident Care Aide program (a six- to nine-month course offered by colleges in BC) is often recommended. These programs usually include CPR, FoodSafe, first aid, and WHMIS training. Those wishing to work in acute care may also require an acute care certificate.

The following is a brief list of accredited schools offering the Resident Care Attendant program. The list does not include all schools that may offer the same type of program. School program administrators and employers suggest that if you are interested in this type of career then spending time with seniors as a volunteer or conducting an informational interview with a potential employer is beneficial to your career and education decision making.

Certificate Program

Capilano University

2055 Purcell Way
North Vancouver, BC V7J 3H5
Phone: (604) 986-1911
Website: www.capcollege.bc.ca

Okanagan College

1000 KLO Road
Kelowna, BC V1Y 4X8
Phone: (250) 862-5419 or 1-800-767-5492
Website: www.okanagan.bc.ca

College of New Caledonia

3330 22nd Avenue
Prince George, BC V2N 1P8
Phone: (250) 562-2131
Website: www.cnc.bc.ca

Sprott-Shaw Community College

301 – 340 Victoria Street
Kamloops, BC V2C 2A5
Phone: (250) 314-1122 or (604) 310-4473
Website: www.sprottshaw.com

Douglas College

PO Box 2503
New Westminster, BC V3L 5B2
Phone: (604) 527-5400
Website: www.douglas.bc.ca

Thompson Career College Inc.

774 Victoria Street
Kamloops, BC V2C 2B6
Phone: (250) 372-8211 or (877) 840-0888
Website: www.thompsoncc.ca/index.html

Northern Lights College

11401 8th Street
Dawson Creek, BC V1G 4G2
Phone: (250) 782-5251
Website: www.nlc.bc.ca

Thompson Rivers University

900 McGill Road
Kamloops, BC V2C 6N2
Phone: (250) 828-5000
Website: www.tru.ca

For a full list of educational institutions offering training for Resident Care Aides, please visit: www.educationplanner.bc.ca

³ This section includes information taken from Career Cruising 2010 Internet Website, www.careercruising.com. The information taken has been slightly altered by the Kamloops Work Search Centre staff for readability.

Skills, Abilities and Qualities Employers Are Looking For

- Completed post-secondary education (certificate)
- Ability to think critically and creatively to meet varying needs
- Ability to develop self-awareness
- Empathetic, dependable and shows integrity
- Available to work various hours
- A genuine concern for the well being of others
- Ability to understand detailed instructions and able to follow through with information
- Physical stamina
- Positive attitude
- No sensitivity or allergy to latex

Career Planning Information

Working Conditions⁴

The majority of resident care aides work in hospital wards or residential long-term care facilities. In British Columbia most care workers work for private or municipal organizations. The Provincial Government's role is confined to setting eligibility criteria. Care workers generally work on their own with reporting periodically to their supervisor. A detailed list of services, policies and procedures are explained and need to be followed during client visits. Many aides work casual or part-time and weekend hours are common. Shifts are usually 8-12 hours in length, and full-time employees work 36-40 hours per week, often through weekends, holidays, or evenings.

As an aide you can work in hospitals, clinics, palliative care, private residence or long term care facilities. You can make a difference to people who are recovering from surgery and illness or who need help in daily living tasks. Emotional help may be required as clients adjust to using a wheel chair, and having to adapt to the aging process. Resident care aides are also susceptible to stress and fatigue as a result of working with the sick and disabled. Other hazards associated with this field include exposure to infectious disease or toxic chemicals, and violent behaviour from patients with mental illnesses. The work of resident care aides can be physically demanding as well. Constant standing, walking, and lifting can cause injuries to the back and neck. However, newly imposed health standards requiring health-care workers to use patient lifts have significantly reduced the incidence of worksite injury.

The daily routine of these workers may vary. Homemakers may go to the same home every day for months or several years. More commonly, they work with a number of different clients, each job lasting a few hours, days or weeks. They often visit four or five clients on the same day. Surroundings differ from case to case. Some homes are neat and pleasant while others are untidy or unpleasant. Some clients can be angry, depressed or otherwise difficult. Others are pleasant and cooperative.

⁴ This information was taken from Work Futures website www.workfutures.bc.ca (NOC 3413), accessed Jan. 2010

Types of Work Environments

At Home Care

Home Support services help seniors remain in their own homes. Home support workers provide personal assistance with daily activities such as bathing, dressing, grooming and light household tasks that help maintain a safe and supportive home. The exact role of a home care worker will depend on the client.

Independent Housing with Support

This is housing where seniors live in communal settings (typically apartment units) and receive home support services. This would include some combination of meals, housekeeping, social activities, and a 24-hour response.

Assisted Living

Assisted living residences provide housing, hospitality and personalized assistance services for adults who can live independently but require regular assistance with daily activities. Each unit is a self-contained, wheelchair-accessible apartment where residents receive hospitality and personal care services, such as meals, housekeeping and laundry, social and recreational opportunities, assistance with medications, mobility and other care needs, as well as a 24-hour response system. The level of personal care services provided is usually higher than Independent Housing with Support.



Wages

Earnings vary depending on location, type of employment and whether the work is part-time or full-time. Many home care workers are employed by agencies that specialize in matching health care workers with clients. Since health care is publicly funded in Canada, the government pays agencies a set hourly rate to provide home care to various individuals. The agencies employ workers and then pay them part of the amount they receive from the government. According to BC Work Futures⁵, the average annual earnings for a full-time worker in this field is \$35,359, which, when compared to other occupations, is below the national average. Usually, the amount of pay that workers get ranges from \$12 - \$18 an hour, depending on the province. The average hourly wage for RCAs is \$14.77.

⁵ Information taken from BC Work Futures (www.workfutures.bc.ca), accessed Jan. 2010

Employment Prospects

Care Aides are a large occupational group, with estimated employment in this field to be 27,390 positions in 2010. Overall, future job prospects in this field are above average. It is expected that more than 3,950 positions will open between 2010 and 2015 due to retirement. A high rate of worker turnover will create many additional openings. This is a reflection of the relatively low skill requirements, historically low pay and casual / part-time nature of the work. Today, however, strong demand for resident care aides is contributing to higher salaries and increased opportunities to work in diverse environments.

Care workers often help keep the elderly or disabled out of expensive residential care facilities, so demand for their services grew with the aging population. Demands for these workers are strongest on Vancouver Island and in the Okanagan, Greater Vancouver and Fraser Valley because many people move to these regions to retire. As the result of an initiative by the provincial government to increase the number of long-term care beds available in B.C. there are now more employment opportunities for resident care aides. Employment opportunities will be high throughout the province, particularly in nursing homes, long-term care facilities and privately run institutions. Partly as a result of general shortages of registered and licensed practical nurses, resident care aides are now increasingly being employed in acute care settings.

There is a growing belief that treatments can be more effective in a familiar setting rather than clinical surroundings and the development of portable medical equipment for in-home treatment has made this increasingly possible. Elderly patients often do not need the extensive services of an acute care setting, but do require support services to remain in their homes.

Advancement is limited for these workers but there is room for mobility among the occupations in this group. With experience and training, visiting homemakers may move into such occupations as health care aide or long term care aide in nursing homes and long term care institutions. The most experienced aides may assist patients with medical equipment, such as ventilators. With additional training and education, resident care aides can also become licensed practical nurses or registered nurses. It is also possible to acquire career enhancement certification in areas such as foot care and diabetes.



Laddering Up In Your Career Path⁶

You can use the skills you learn in this job, combined with college courses, as a base for other kinds of work in health care. The following steps show you how you can look at laddering into other positions in health care.

Step 1

- Resident Care Aide
- College Certificate Program
- Experience and on the job training may lead to more responsibility
- Ranges from \$11 - \$21/hour

Step 2

- Nursing Assistant
- In B.C. a licensed practical nurse needs to hold a license, usually after a one-year course at a B.C. college (Can Practical Nurse exam)
- Responsibilities have increased as supply & demand of RN's has sifted
- Approximately \$31,700/ year (full-time)

Step 3

- Registered Nurse
- Two-year program at many of B.C.'s training institutions (Licensure by the province)
- More responsibilities and higher wage then a LPN
- Approximately \$48,000/year (full-time)



⁶ The following information contains information taken from [Start Now! Work Futures for Entry Level Jobs](#) accessed Jan. 2010

Internet Resources

Another way to research the Resident Care Industry is to look on-line and compare valuable information about potential employers or current labour market information. The following list suggests various website links to help you in your research:

www.caregiverlistings.com	Canadian Care Giver Database
www.caregiverbc.ca	Care Givers Association of B.C.
www.caregiver.on.ca	Caregiver Network
www.bccare.ca/indexbig.html	BC Care Providers Association
www.bchealthguide.org	BC Health Guide
www.interiorhealth.ca	Interior Health Website
www.heabc.bc.ca	Health Employers Association of B.C.
www.carebc.ca	Health & Home Care Society of BC
www.labourmarketinformation.ca	Service Canada LMI Website
www.whatskey.org/occupations.html	What's Key Opportunities
www.caregiverlistings.com	Caregiver Listing Job Postings



Employer Home Support / Resident Care Aid Listings

A1 People Care

1046 7th Street
Kamloops, BC
Ph: (250) 554-3555

Active Care Senior Services –

Retirement Communities & Homes
1607 Greenfield
Kamloops, BC
Ph: (250) 554-9244

Bedford Manor

529 Seymour Street, Kamloops

Berwick On The Park Retirement

Residence – Adult Care
60 Whiteshield Cres South
Kamloops, BC V2E 2S9
Ph: (250) 377-7275
Fax: 377-7276
www.berwickrc.com

Cariboo Manor

831 Serle Rd
Kamloops, BC
Ph: (250) 579-9350

Community Home Care Nursing

#37-450 Lansdowne St
Kamloops, BC V2C 1Y3
Ph: (250) 851-7935
Fax: (250) 851-7910

Cottonwood Manor

730 Cottonwood Ave
Kamloops, BC V2B 8M6
Phone: (250) 376-4777
Fax: (250) 376-4792

Desert Gardens Community Centre

540 Seymour Street
Kamloops, BC V2C 2G9
Ph: (250) 372-5110
Fax: (250) 372-3429

High Country Health Care Inc

#108A-540 Seymour St
Kamloops, BC V2C 2G9
Ph: (250) 372-2252
Fax: (250) 372-5821

In-Home Care Inc

#314-141 Victoria St
Kamloops, BC V2C 1Z5
Ph: 851-0078
Fax: 851-0016

Kamloops Seniors Village

1220 Hugh Allan Drive
Kamloops, BC
Ph: (250) 571-1800
www.retirementconcepts.com

Long Term Care

#37-450 Lansdowne St
Kamloops, BC V2C 1Y3
Ph: (250) 851-7900
Fax: 851-7910

Marjorie Willoughby Memorial Hospice

72 Whiteshield Cres. South
Kamloops, BC V2E 2S9
Ph: (250) 372-1336
Fax: (250) 372-1297

Employer Home Support / Resident Care Aid Listing (Continued)

Nurse Next Door

Phone: (250) 377-0011

Overlander Extended Care Hospital - Hospital

953 Southill St
Kamloops, BC V2B 7Z9
Ph: (250) 554-2323 / 554-5569
Fax: 554-5557

Parkside Estate Retirement Residence – Retirement Communities & Homes

743 Okanagan
Chase, BC
Ph: (250) 679-4477
www.parksideestate.com

Pine Grove Care Centre – Community Care Facilities – Adult Care

313 McGowan Ave
Kamloops, BC
Ph: (250) 376-5701
Fax: (250) 376-2453

Ponderosa Lodge – Community Care Facilities – Adult Care

425 Columbia St.
Kamloops, BC V2C 2T4
Ph: (250) 374-5671
E-mail: kamloops@wecarecanada.com

Renaissance Retirement Residence – Retirement Communities & Homes

628 Tranquille Rd.
Kamloops, BC
Ph: (250) 376-5363
www.chartwellreit.ca

The Shores Retirement Residence (Adult Care)

Community Care Facilities
870 Westminster Ave
Kamloops, BC V2B 1N9
Ph: (250) 376-0315
www.caretenderinc.com

The Hamlets at Westsyde

3435 Westsyde Rd
Kamloops, BC
Ph: (250) 579-9061
www.thehamletsatwestsyde.com

Thrupp Manor Senior Citizens' Home – Retirement Communities & Homes

591 Royal Ave
Kamloops, BC V2B 3P8
Ph: (250) 376-6536
Fax: (250) 376-6513

Thompson Community Services Inc.

1450 Pearson Place, Suite 102
Kamloops, BC V1S
Phone: (250) 828-0739 or 828-1508
Fax: (250) 372-7544

WeCare Home Health Services

651 Victoria St
Kamloops, BC V2C 2B3
Ph: (250) 851-2911
Fax: (250) 851-2949



Home and Continuing Care

Changes brought on by the demands of the 21st Century are transforming the face of health care in Canada. Shorter hospital stays, greater use of outpatient treatment and a growing population of older Canadians with longer life expectancy have increased Canadians' need for home and continuing care.

Health Canada's Goal

Our goal is to enable individuals who need care for acute or chronic conditions to receive high quality treatment at home, in the community, in supportive housing, or in long-term care facilities. Support for friends and family, who provide much of the care received at home, is also important.

Health Canada's Role

The Department is engaged in research, information gathering, and analysis on all aspects of home and continuing care in Canada. We work in close alliance with the provincial and territorial governments, who, in most cases, set policy guidelines and standards for regional service delivery, reporting requirements and monitoring outcomes.

What is Home and Continuing Care?

Home and continuing care encompass a wide range of health services delivered at home and throughout the community to recovering, disabled, chronically or terminally ill persons in need of medical, nursing, social or therapeutic treatment and/or assistance with the essential activities of daily living. Continuing care also includes supportive housing and long-term facility based care.

What Information Can You Find Here?

From here, you can access information on the ways in which Health Canada contributes to advancing home and continuing care in Canada. You will find timely information on home and continuing care and a list of links to additional information relating to home and continuing care. http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hcs-sss/home-domicile/index_e.html.