



CANADIAN COALITION FOR SENIORS' MENTAL HEALTH  
To promote seniors' mental health by connecting people, ideas and resources

COALITION CANADIENNE POUR LA SANTÉ MENTALE DES PERSONNES ÂGÉES  
Promouvoir la santé mentale des personnes âgées en reliant les personnes, les idées et les ressources

## **Fact Sheet:**

# **FOCUSING ON LONG-TERM CARE SETTINGS**

Long-term care is a vital component of the Canadian health care system. While most seniors can expect to reside in the community throughout their later years, a significant number will require institutional care to ensure safety and well-being. The need for long-term care services and support is greatest for those with the greatest vulnerability—the most elderly, most frail, and most compromised by behavioral and psychiatric disorders.

Canada's population of seniors has risen in recent decades. Consider that:

- Seniors age 85 and older are the fastest-growing age group and the most likely to require long-term care facilities,
- Some 38% of all women and 24% of men age 85 and older live in a long-term care facility, according to Stats Canada,
- Over the next 30 years, the number of long-term care beds in Canada is expected to triple.

Recent studies show that the majority of seniors living in long-term care settings—between 80% and 90% have some form of mental disorder. According to one of the most rigorous studies on the prevalence of specific psychiatric disorders, in 454 consecutive nursing home admissions:

- 10% suffered from a mood disorder,
- 2.4% were diagnosed as having schizophrenia or other psychiatric illness,
- More than two thirds of the residents had some form of dementia,
- 40% of the residents suffering from dementia had psychiatric complications such as depression, delusions or delirium.

Depression is also extremely common in the nursing home setting. Studies suggest that between 15% and 25% of long-term care residents have symptoms of major depression and another 25% have depressive symptoms of lesser severity.

The creation of a positive, supportive environment and the provision of good care can contribute to the mental health of residents in long-term care.

**for more information, visit [www.ccsmh.ca](http://www.ccsmh.ca)**