

# CHOOSING A NURSING HOME



Megantic English-speaking  
Community Development Corporation

February 2013

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Megantic English-speaking Community  
Development Corporation

906 Mooney Street West  
Thetford Mines (Qc)  
G6G 6H2

Telephone: 418-332-3851  
Toll free: 1-877-332-3851  
Fax: 418-332-3153  
E-mail: [mcdc@bellnet.ca](mailto:mcdc@bellnet.ca)  
Website: [www.mcdc.info](http://www.mcdc.info)

*If you experience  
problems accessing information  
or services in English, do not  
hesitate to contact MCDC. Our  
staff will be happy to assist you  
in total confidentiality.*

## **Disclaimer:**

The information in this booklet is meant as a general service only. It is in summary form and the information may change from time to time so some of the content may become out of date. MCDC assumes no responsibility for how this material is used by the public.

## **Design & Layout:**

Graphisme Suzane Chouinard, St. Ferdinand

## **Printer:**

Imprimerie Gingras, Thetford Mines

## **Printed in Canada:**

February 2013

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction .....	4
The Public Sector.....	5
The Private Sector .....	5
Financial Assistance with Rental Costs .....	6
Income tax credit.....	6
Accommodation Budget .....	6
Tables:	
Security .....	9
Access (from parking) .....	10
General Interest & Activities .....	10-11
Suites .....	11-12
Meals and Food.....	12
Human resources .....	13
Medical support.....	13-14
Assisted living and dementia.....	14
Visitors.....	15
Cost .....	15
Questions to ask tenants .....	16
Bill 22 .....	17
Contacts.....	18
Sources.....	19

## INTRODUCTION

All of us wish to live in our own home or apartment for as long as possible but there comes a time when the condition of our health no longer allows us to do so. The time will come when you will have to change your current surroundings for those which will provide you with a safer environment. At that time you may have to take the necessary steps yourself to select a residence in the private sector.

Looking for such a facility can be an emotional and challenging experience. The market is extensive. There is something for everyone, depending on whether you want a smaller facility or a larger one that offers a wide range of services.

In the private sector, the rates are established by the residence owners based on the services they offer and the demand; however any increase in the rates is controlled by norms established by the rental board or the “Régie du logement”.

This guide will show you the proper steps to follow in this process. It will help you make your choice and negotiate a detailed agreement between you and the residence owner. Be sure to shop around! Try to visit at least 3 or 4 different places.

### Remember:

- ✱ It is up to you to decide which residence you prefer given your financial situation and your needs!
- ✱ You should give special consideration to choosing a residence that is located either near a family member or a good friend who would be able to provide support, reassurance and possibly advocacy if required.



## THE PUBLIC SECTOR:

### Did you know...

If your health situation deteriorates to the point where your independence or autonomy is affected, you, either by yourself or with the help of family or friends, will have to make a request to the local health and social service centre (CSSS) or CLSC to perform an evaluation of your needs and situation.

Following that evaluation, a social worker from the CLSC will determine the type of services you need. Depending on your situation, he/she will organize a personal care plan for you, which may either maintain you in your current residence with the necessary support services, or he/she will make a request for you to be relocated to a residence in the public sector.

There is usually a waiting list for finding a space in a public sector residence. The rates for accommodation are fixed and controlled by the Régie d'assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ). The rates vary depending on the income of the individual and are indexed annually to the cost of living.

## THE PRIVATE SECTOR:

### Did you know...

Each owner of a senior's residence must by law possess a certificate of compliance.

The owner may provide any prospective resident an information document containing the following:

- ✧ the mission statement of the residence
- ✧ an outline of all services available, and their costs, or a clear statement by the residence if it does not offer any services
- ✧ a statement of the level of services that can be offered to individuals who may suffer from limited autonomy
- ✧ the procedure for resolving complaints
- ✧ the code of ethics for the employees of the residence
- ✧ the procedures and amount of refunds available from government programs, should they be applicable
- ✧ the rules governing the daily operations of the residence

*Assistance to find a retirement home in your area can be made through your local CLSC via a social worker. Call MCDC for information.*

A list of residences in Québec is available on the following website [www.msss.gouv.qc.ca/sujets/groupes/personnes\\_agees.php](http://www.msss.gouv.qc.ca/sujets/groupes/personnes_agees.php)

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WITH RENTAL COSTS:

### Did you know...

If you have limited sources of revenue, you may be eligible for government assistance with your accommodations. To check your admissibility, please contact Revenue Québec. (Refer to the list of "Contacts and Resources" at the end of this booklet)

## INCOME TAX CREDIT:

### Did you know...

If you are 70 years of age or older you may qualify for a credit for certain approved services for personal and household assistance. Contact Revenu Québec, Service Québec or MCDC.

## ACCOMMODATION BUDGET:

Use the following tables to calculate your revenues and expenditures. After your visits, compare with what it would cost you to move in to a residence:

### Monthly Revenue:

- Quebec Pension Plan \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - Old Age Security (including your Guaranteed Income Supplement if applicable) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - RRSPs monthly income \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - Other pension revenue \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - Any other revenue (interests, dividends, ...) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- TOTAL Monthly Revenue** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## Monthly Expenditures:

	Your present costs	Residence 1	Residence 2	Residence 3
Rent	\$			
Telephone	\$			
TV Cable	\$			
Insurance	\$			
Clothing	\$			
Recreation	\$			
Food and restaurants	\$			
Medication	\$			
Transportation and travel	\$			
Taxes and accounts	\$			
Personal care	\$			
Others	\$			
<b>TOTAL COST</b>	\$			



Take this guide with you (along with extra note paper) as you visit each residence and jot down general impressions and all extra information you collect:

### RESIDENCE 1

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments :  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### RESIDENCE 2

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments :  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### RESIDENCE 3

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments :  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



SECURITY	Res 1	Res 2	Res 3
Are all doors locked 24-hours a day or only at night?			
Is there a Receptionist?			
Are there security cameras?			
Is there an electronic surveillance system?			
Is there an intercom?			
Is there an emergency calling system?			
Is there an emergency exit on each floor?			
Are there handrails in the hallways?			
What is the lighting like in the residence? Is it bright and well distributed or dark in hallways and public areas?			
Do suites have sprinklers, smoke detectors, heat detectors, carbon monoxide detectors?			
Are hallways, doorways and suites wide enough for wheelchairs?			
What kind of security is available to prevent residents with dementia from wandering out of the unit and the residence?			
How does the emergency call bell system work? Is there always someone who can answer the call on site?			
How are people with reduced mobility evacuated in case of emergency?			

<b>ACCESS (FROM PARKING)</b>	<b>Res 1</b>	<b>Res 2</b>	<b>Res 3</b>
Elevators			
Stairs			
Access ramp			
Access by wheelchair			
Accompaniment services			
Near-by public transportation			
Adapted transportation			
Snow removal from the parking			

<b>GENERAL INTEREST AND ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Res 1</b>	<b>Res 2</b>	<b>Res 3</b>
Does the building look clean and well-maintained?			
Does it smell clean? (Notice the common areas, hallways, kitchen, dining area, different floors of the building and suites).			
Are there individual temperature control units (for heat and/or cold) in each suite?			
Is there a patio area/shady spots/garden with seating?			
Do residents seem to be happy, well cared for/dressed/clean?			
Do the recreation facilities and/or programs meet your needs?			
Are religious /cultural holidays celebrated at the residence?			
Is there access to amenities within the residence or close by in the community? (i.e. shops, restaurants, coffee shops, theatres, banks etc.)			
Is there resident parking? Is it indoor or outdoor? Is there a cost?			

<b>GENERAL INTEREST AND ACTIVITIES (CONT'D)</b>	<b>Res 1</b>	<b>Res 2</b>	<b>Res 3</b>
Is there adequate guest parking? Is there a cost?			
Which services are available in the residence, such as a convenience store, a hairdresser, banking?			
Is there a smoking parlour in the residence?			
What kind of animation / activities are there in the residence? (Social, exercise, entertainment, trips etc.)			
Is there a gym with equipment?			
Are there scheduled activities in the evenings and on weekends?			
How are daily activities and events communicated to residents?			
Do residents have input into activities or events?			

<b>SUITES</b>	<b>Res 1</b>	<b>Res 2</b>	<b>Res 3</b>
Do you like the size and layout of the suite in your price range?			
Do suites have a kitchenette, fridge, microwave?			
Are there cable TV, internet and phone outlets in all suites?			
Are the suites clean, bright and comfortable?			
Do bathrooms have enough space for wheelchairs?			
Is there adequate storage /closet space for residents' belongings in the suites?			
Are bathrooms clean and in good condition?			
Are bathrooms private? Are they two-piece (toilet/sink), three piece (toilet/sink/shower) or four piece (toilet/sink/tub/shower)?			

<b>SUITES (CONT'D)</b>	<b>Res 1</b>	<b>Res 2</b>	<b>Res 3</b>
Are there call bells in bathrooms?			
Which assistive devices are present in bathrooms and which can be installed, if necessary? (i.e. support bars)			
Are pets permitted?			

<b>MEALS AND FOOD</b>	<b>Res 1</b>	<b>Res 2</b>	<b>Res 3</b>
Is there a dietician on staff?			
Are the meals good and nutritious?			
Can special diets be accommodated?			
Do menus rotate/change on a weekly basis?			
At what time are the meals served?			
Is sufficient time allowed for meals?			
What kinds of refreshments are offered between meals and at what time of day?			
Are 3 meals/day and snacks included in fee?			
Is room service available? Is there an extra cost?			
Ask if you can see the kitchen. Does it appear clean?			
Is there a central dining area for all residents?			
Is there reserved or assigned seating for residents?			
Is there a possibility of getting meals credited if going away for a long period of time?			

<b>HUMAN RESOURCES – STAFF &amp; ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>Res 1</b>	<b>Res 2</b>	<b>Res 3</b>
What is the ratio of staff to residents? Does the ratio differ between the daytime and night-time and weekends?			
What training does the staff have?			
If language is an issue, are there staff that speak English? If not, how do they communicate with English-speaking residents?			
Who owns/manages the residence?			
How long have they owned/managed it?			
Is there a waiting list to get into the residence?			
If yes, how long is it?			

<b>MEDICAL SUPPORT</b>	<b>Res 1</b>	<b>Res 2</b>	<b>Res 3</b>
Is there a visiting doctor assigned to the residence?			
Is there nursing staff on-site or available 24-hours/day?			
If you require oxygen therapy – or think that you might in the near future – will they accept residents with oxygen and in what form (liquid, compressors etc.)? Will they assist with its use (i.e. filling portable tanks, etc.)?			
Are there restrictions around certain medical conditions that cannot be managed in this home?			
What is the cost of extra care if you should require it at a later date?			
What happens if your health declines (physically and/or mentally) while you are a resident?			
Do they help you find an alternative living arrangement and allow you to stay while you look for a new home?			

<b>MEDICAL SUPPORT (CONT'D)</b>	<b>Res 1</b>	<b>Res 2</b>	<b>Res 3</b>
Can your care needs be met at an affordable price?			
Are there optional care and meal packages?			
Is assistance available for dressing?			
Is assistance available for eating?			
Is assistance available for moving/mobility?			
Is assistance available for bath and hygiene care?			
Is palliative care available?			

<b>ASSISTED LIVING AND DEMENTIA</b>	<b>Res 1</b>	<b>Res 2</b>	<b>Res 3</b>
Is there an Assisted Living area?			
Is there a Dementia area?			
What are the criteria for admission to the Assisted Living/Dementia area and is there an extra cost involved?			
Exactly what and how much extra care do they provide in the Assisted Living/Dementia area?			
What kind of security is available to prevent residents with Dementia from wandering out of the unit and out of the residence?			
Are staff specifically trained to cope with patients with Dementia			
What is the policy in regards to restraints?			
At what frequency are rounds made?			

<b>VISITORS</b>	<b>Res 1</b>	<b>Res 2</b>	<b>Res 3</b>
Are there visiting hours?			
Is there adequate guest parking? Is there a cost?			
Are guest suites available?			
Are friends and relatives able to come with residents on outings?			
How are guests accommodated at meal times? Is there an extra cost?			

<b>COST</b>	<b>Res1</b>	<b>Res 2</b>	<b>Res 3</b>
What is included in your monthly cost? (Ask about meals, housekeeping, laundry, activities, personal care and utilities).			
Are there hidden/extra/unpublished costs? What are they?			
How is rent paid (cheques, pre-authorized payments, etc.) and how often?			
What is the total monthly cost?			
Is there a written Tenancy Agreement (lease) that residents must sign before moving in? By law, there should be one. Ask to see a copy of it as well as their Care Home Information Package. Take it home and review it carefully before signing it. Be sure that all the services you are expecting to receive are itemized in the Agreement.			

## QUESTIONS TO ASK TENANTS

*If possible try to speak with some residents and their family members. Remember – they know best what the residence and staff are like and whether it is a place that is safe and enjoyable to live in.*

**Here are some questions that could be asked to tenants:**

- How long have they been there?

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- How nice is the staff?

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- How is the food?

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- Do they like the residence?

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- Are their needs being met?

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- What are the activities like, and do they enjoy participating?

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- What do they like most about this home and what do they like least?

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## Bill 22

### Amendment of the Civil Code as regards the resiliation of a dwelling lease in certain cases

As assented to, the legislation reduces the lease resiliation (cancellation) notice period in the cases referred to in articles 1974 and 1974.1. **The notice period has been reduced from three months to two months.**

The legislation is aimed specifically at the following cases:

- elderly tenants who are admitted permanently to a residential and long term care centre, a private seniors' residence where the nursing care and personal assistance services required by their state of health are provided, or any other lodging facility, regardless of its name, where such care and services are provided;
- tenants who can no longer occupy their dwelling because of a handicap;
- tenants who are allocated a dwelling in low-rental housing or, under a court decision, are relocated to an equivalent dwelling corresponding to their needs;
- the safety of tenants or that of children living with them is threatened by the violent behavior of a spouse or former spouse, or by sexual assault;
- and lastly, tenants who die.

The legislation:

- **reduces the period for notifying landlords of resiliation of a lease from three months to two months.** If, in the interval, the dwelling is released, the tenant does not have to pay the rent;
- excludes from the rent the cost of services of a personal nature provided tenants by landlords if tenants must vacate their dwelling or they die. The tenant or the succession will therefore immediately cease paying those expenses when the tenant vacates his or her dwelling or dies;
- adds that leases may be resiliated if, owing to the state of health of seniors, they must move to ensure their health and safety. Leases can be resiliated if tenants are admitted permanently to a lodging facility.

## CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

### Agence de la santé et des services sociaux :

- Chaudière-Appalaches 1-418-386-3502
- Mauricie et Centre-du-Québec 1-819-693-3636

Rental Allocation – Revenu Québec 1-800-267-6299

Commission des droits de la personne et des droits  
de la jeunesse (Committee for Citizens and Youths' Rights) 1-877-371-6196

Office de la protection du consommateur  
(Consumer Protection Bureau) 1-888-672-2556

Protecteur de Citoyen (Ombudsman) 1-800-463-5070

Régie des rentes de Québec (Québec Pension Board) 1-800-463-5185

Régie du logement (Rental Board) 1-800-683-2245

Regroupement des comités logement et association de  
locataires du Québec (Provincial association for tenants) 1-866-521-7114

Regroupement québécois des résidences pour aînés  
(Provincial association of seniors' residences) 1-888-440-3777

Revenu Québec 1-800-267-6299

Service Canada 1-800-622-6232

Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement 1-800-277-9915

Services Québec 1-877-644-4545

Tables de concertation des aînés de Chaudière-Appalaches 1-877-533-5678

FADOQ de Québec et Chaudière-Appalaches 1-418-650-3552

### Health and Social Services Centres (CSSSs)

- Thetford Region 1-418-338-7777
- Beauce 1-418-774-3304
- Etchemins 1-418-625-8001
- Montmagny-l'Islet 1-418-248-0630
- Alphonse-Desjardins 1-418-380-8996
- Arthabaska-Érable 1-819-357-2030

## SOURCES

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2. HELPING SENIORS. *The 65 Key Questions You Must Ask When Looking For A Residence*, Québec.
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4. Bill 22. [http://www.rdl.gouv.qc.ca/en/pdf/Resume-Loi22\\_Web.pdf](http://www.rdl.gouv.qc.ca/en/pdf/Resume-Loi22_Web.pdf)





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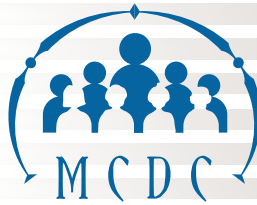
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906 Mooney Street West  
Thetford Mines (Qc) G6G 6H2

Telephone: 418-332-3851

Toll free: 1-877-332-3851

Fax: 418-332-3153

E-mail: [mcdc@bellnet.ca](mailto:mcdc@bellnet.ca) / Website: [www.mcdc.info](http://www.mcdc.info)

Production of this booklet has been made possible through funding by  
Health Canada.



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