

Notification of private pay daily rate increase

We wish to inform you of an upcoming adjustment to the rate structure at Evergreen, in line with the daily rates established by Island Health for long-term care. Effective **April 1st, 2024**, your rate will experience an increase to \$310.60.

We understand that this adjustment may have significant implications, especially for individuals who have been residents at Evergreen for 24 months or more.

In the past, beds were typically allocated public funding based on waitlist dates, a process that often took approximately two years for placement. However, there has been a shift in this allocation process, with beds now being assigned based on community needs rather than waitlist dates. We understand that this change may present challenges for those who are privately paying, resulting in longer wait times. We want to express our sincere empathy for any difficulties this may cause.

In the report titled "A Billion Reasons to Care," authored by Isabel Makenzie, the Seniors Advocate of British Columbia, a statement was made as follows: "B.C. seniors residing in long-term care facilities deserve the highest quality of care, and taxpayers should have confidence that their investment in senior care is effectively utilized." At Evergreen, we embrace and echo this sentiment.

We recognize the responsibility inherent in utilizing resources effectively and efficiently, and we are dedicated to being transparent and accountable in our actions.

It is important to recognize that not all private for-profit healthcare facilities are driven solely by profit. The misconception that profit is the primary motivator often overlooks the actual costs associated with delivering long-term care compared to the funding received. Providing round-the-clock, all-inclusive care to a frail population during a vulnerable time inherently comes with significant expenses.

With this rate increase notice, we are providing some information about how the funding works and resource allocation.

Summary

Founded in 2006, Evergreen has delivered a blend of publicly and privately funded care, utilizing a compassionate, flexible, and reliable model. Our deep connection with the community emphasizes our commitment to offering person-centered care to meet the diverse needs of each individual under our care. Additionally, we consistently adhere to ethical standards and uphold fiscal responsibility across all facets of our business operations.

How is the Daily Rate Calculated?

Annually, Island Health determines the daily rate that establishes the foundation for Private Pay daily rates at Evergreen. Given the chronic underfunding in long-term care, the rate set by Island Health represents just a starting point. At Evergreen, we strive to enhance our services within this financially constrained environment through innovative approaches.

The rate defined by Island Health mirrors the escalating expenses necessary to provide high-quality care. We are contending with increasing costs driven by inflation, bureaucratic hurdles, rising interest rates, escalating prices for food and supplies, utility expenses, and notable wage hikes for RNs (25%), LPNs (12.5%), and HCAs (12%) since 2020.

Displayed below are the rates since 2019, highlighting this year's significant 10.5% increase. While we foresee a potential stabilization in costs in the near future, it's important to note that the latest rate update from Island Health, effective retroactively from April 2023, was received only recently. Importantly, we have chosen not to apply these increased rates retroactively to our private pay families.

Our rates typically trail those funded publicly, a reflection of our commitment to mitigating the financial burden on our residents and their families. Ensuring that private pay rates are in line with the foundational daily rates set by Island Health is crucial for maintaining the balance between affordability and quality care.

April 1 st -Mar. 31 st	Daily Rate set by IH (Total annual increase)
2023/2024	\$310.59 (↑10.5%)
2022/2023	\$281.16 (↑3.38%)
2021/2022	\$271.64
2020/2021	\$267.26
2019/2020	\$257.35

Funded Care Hours

Facilities are granted flexibility in determining how to allocate the daily rate, but must meet specific daily direct care hour targets set by the Ministry of Health. These targets represent the total amount of direct contact with staff members (HCAs, nurses, therapists, etc.) within a 24-hour period. The table below illustrates the direct care hour requirements for the past three years, alongside the actual hours provided by Evergreen.

We consistently exceed the minimum required hours on a daily basis, demonstrating our firm commitment to providing dependable care that surpasses industry standards for our residents.

Comparing minimum LTC direct care hours per resident in a 24 hour period, vs actual hours provided at Evergreen	Minimum required direct care hours	Actual delivered direct care hours by Evergreen
2022/2023	3.36	4.33
2020/2021	3.36	3.94
2019/2020	3.36	4.08

Furthermore, despite maintaining high staffing levels, our overtime expenses remain remarkably low, which is significant when compared to industry standards.

Here is a look at last year’s quarterly report of the percentage of overtime hours relative to total hours
 Jan-March 1.35% April-June 0.05% July-Sept 0.14% Oct-Dec 1.12%

Workforce

A positive workforce is essential for delivering quality care, as evidenced by our 2022 Worklife Staff Survey Results, showing high levels of satisfaction and recommendation rates among our staff.

Worklife Staff Survey Results, Evergreen 2022	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Would you recommend this organization to friends and family who require care?	100%	0%	0%
Overall, how would you rate your organization as a place to work?	97.6% good; 2.4% fair; 0% poor		
Overall, how satisfied are you with your job?	96.5% satisfied; 3.5% neutral		

Wait Times

We advocate for equitable access to public funding for privately paying residents, engaging with MLA, Seniors Advocate, and Island Health. Despite the healthcare and housing crisis impacting public bed access, we continue our community outreach to alleviate pressure and plan to enhance community support to address the impact on private pay residents unfairly.

If you have any questions about your wait times for public beds, please speak with your Island Health Community Health Services case manager directly.

Conclusion

In conclusion, as we adjust to the changes, including the update to our private pay daily rates, we prioritize open communication, transparency, and understanding within our community. We appreciate your patience and trust as we adapt to these new circumstances, always with the goal of ensuring the highest quality of care for our residents. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with any questions or concerns. Together, we are dedicated to promoting and developing a supportive environment where every member of the Evergreen family feels valued, heard, and cared for.

If you would like to discuss the costs further, please arrange to meet with our Director of Finance, Elaine Blackburn @ elaine.blackburn@evergreenseniors.com

If you would like to discuss system navigation and why the waitlist issue or advocacy routes, please connect with myself, Karena Marks @ karena.marks@evergreenseniors.com

In addition, I have included the introduction of our newly formed Leadership team. As this group works to cover 24/7, their scheduled hours vary. All short notice, urgent or after-hours should go to weareateam@evergreenseniors.com. This reaches this team and therefore the on-call manager can respond.

Thank you for entrusting us with the care of your loved ones. Together, we will continue to uphold the values of compassion, reliability, and accountability that define Evergreen.

Warmest Regards,

Karena Marks
General Director