

# Assisted Living Explained

You've probably heard the phrase "Assisted Living" and wondered what it means. The term was coined in the US more than 20 years ago to describe services that went beyond simply hospitality (meals, housekeeping). It referred to the addition of services for "activities of daily living" that aided an individual in continuing to enjoy life by providing things such as assistance with bathing and grooming, medication administration, and other basic activities. "Assisted Living" really filled a gap between independent living, and a true care home where the focus was largely on healthcare services. Since then, Assisted Living has grown to mean different things in different countries, in various organizations, and to different people.

If you haven't dealt with seniors' housing, the terms can be perplexing, particularly if you are a senior or family starting the search for the right place. "Independent Living", "Supportive Living", "Enhanced Care", "Memory Care" and other types of living exist – and can be quite confusing. Luckily, in British Columbia, the term "Assisted Living" is far more well-defined than in most other areas of Canada. That's because the BC government has defined it as follows:



Assisted living services provide housing, hospitality services and personal care services for adults who can live independently and make decisions on their own behalf but require a supportive environment due to physical and functional health challenges.

Assisted living residences are intended for persons who are independent and require day-to-day assistance in one or two areas (e.g. medications, bathing or life skills). This differs from licensed residential care where people may require more assistance on a daily basis and with complex health care needs.

Under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act, all publicly subsidized and private pay assisted living operators in British Columbia must register their residences with the Assisted Living Registry.

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