

2025 Province of BC:

The difference between the long-term care homes under the [Hospital Act](#) vs those under CCALA ([Community Care and Assisted Living Act](#)).

Long-term care facilities under the Hospital Act in British Columbia face issues related to inconsistent standards compared to those under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act (CCALA), creating a dual regulatory system. This leads to a lack of standardization in areas such as care standards, physical environment rules, and reporting requirements for abuse and neglect, with a history of regulatory problems persisting, according to the [BC Ombudsperson](#).

Licensing inspections for long-term care homes under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act (CCALA) and the Hospital Act differ primarily in the level of oversight and standards they are subject to, with the CCALA generally having more extensive and rigorous oversight mechanisms than the Hospital Act.

Community Care and Assisted Living Act (CCALA)

- **What it covers:** Licenses residential care facilities (including private pay), assisted living residences, child daycares, and child and youth residential settings.
- **Level of oversight:** Generally considered more rigorous and extensive than the Hospital Act.
- **Inspections:** Routine inspections are conducted by health authority community care licensing officers and program staff.
- **Staffing:** Requires either a medical practitioner or a registered nurse to be contacted in an emergency, but a registered nurse is not always required to be on-site unless specified by a funding agreement.
- **Standards:** Facilities must meet minimum health and safety requirements and comply with the Residential Care Regulation and Standards of Practice.

Hospital Act

- **What it covers:** Certain hospital-like facilities, often for those requiring higher levels of care.
- **Level of oversight:** Generally, less extensive than the CCALA.
- **Inspections:** Subject to regular health and safety inspections.
- **Staffing:** Generally, it requires on-site medical practitioners or registered nurses.

- **Standards:** Must comply with the Hospital Act and related regulations.

Despite the fact that all long-term care homes are under the same [Residential Care Regulations](#), the oversight and access to remedy under the regulations differ.

Key issues about care homes being under different Acts:

Inconsistent standards: Facilities under the Hospital Act do not have the same legislated care and physical environment standards as those under CCALA. This can lead to differences in the quality of care, resident rights, and the facility's physical condition.

Key differences in standards

Feature	Facilities under the Hospital Act	Facilities under the CCALA
Primary focus	Public hospitals, private hospitals, and extended care facilities, which are primarily for skilled nursing care and medical supervision.	A broader range of residential care, including long-term care, mental health, and assisted living.
Legislated standards	Generally, less extensive and rigorous than those under the CCALA.	More extensive and rigorous, covering areas like care standards, physical environment, and restrictions on double occupancy.
Oversight and inspection	Historically less oversight from regional health authorities; inspection reports may not be publicly posted.	Subject to routine inspections by regional health authorities.
Staffing requirements	May have different requirements for on-site medical practitioners or registered nurses.	Must ensure that either a medical or nurse practitioner can be contacted.
Public access to information	Less public transparency regarding inspections and oversight.	Greater transparency, with public access to inspection reports.

Why does this difference exist?

The Hospital Act was designed for acute and extended care, with a focus on medical supervision, while the CCALA was developed to provide a comprehensive framework for a variety of residential care settings.

The CCALA was created to better protect vulnerable populations by establishing clear rules and oversight for a wider range of care facilities, including assisted living residences for seniors and people with disabilities.

It's important for families to understand which Act governs a particular facility, as this can have a significant impact on the level of care, resident rights, and physical environment standards they can expect.

Lack of consistency: The presence of both regulatory acts creates a "problem of two different regulatory regimes" for residential care facilities, which the government has allowed to continue.

Varied protections: The two acts have different requirements for things like routine inspections, reporting requirements for abuse or neglect, and whether a medical practitioner or registered nurse must be on site.

Dual system: The designation of new long-term care beds under the Hospital Act instead of CCALA has perpetuated this issue, rather than solving it.

Regulatory overlap: Some facilities, particularly private hospitals and extended care facilities, operate under the Hospital Act, while the majority of residential care facilities fall under CCALA. This creates a complex and inconsistent regulatory landscape for long-term care.