

Continuing Care

Living well in a place you call home.

Caregiver Benefit

The Caregiver Benefit recognizes the important role of caregivers in their efforts to assist loved ones and friends. The program is for caregivers of low income adults who have a high level of disability or impairment, as determined by an assessment.

A caregiver may be a spouse, family member, friend or neighbour that is not being paid for the help they provide. This could include supervision, cooking, housekeeping, home maintenance, errands and personal care. To be eligible for this program, a caregiver must provide at least 20 hours of assistance per week.

If the caregiver and the care recipient both qualify for the program, the caregiver will receive \$400 per month.

Eligibility Checklist

The person receiving care must:

- ▶ be 19 years of age or older
- ▶ be a Nova Scotia resident
- ▶ be in a care relationship with a caregiver
- ▶ Have a net annual household income within category A of the home care income table
- ▶ have been assessed by a Nova Scotia Health Continuing Care care coordinator as having a high level of impairment or disability requiring significant care over time

The caregiver must:

- ▶ be 19 years of age or older
- ▶ be a Nova Scotia resident
- ▶ be providing ongoing care of 20 or more hours of assistance per week
- ▶ not already be receiving payment to provide assistance to the person for whom she/he is providing care
- ▶ be willing to sign an agreement that defines the terms and conditions for receiving the Caregiver Benefit

How does the Caregiver Benefit work?

Both the caregiver and the person for whom he/she provides care must meet the program's eligibility criteria. Nova Scotia Health Continuing Care determines eligibility through a referral and assessment. The Caregiver Benefit is reportable income so caregivers should contact Canada Revenue Agency for information about tax implications.

How do I know if I qualify for the program?

If you feel you may qualify for the program you will need to contact Nova Scotia Health Continuing Care at 1-800-225-7225 for an initial discussion about your situation. A referral may then be made to a care coordinator who will meet with you to do an assessment to identify your care needs and determine if you qualify for the program.

Applicants who are assessed as having high care needs have some combination of:

- ▶ mild to significant problems with memory loss, decision-making and communication that affect daily functioning
- ▶ high level of physical impairment
- ▶ many challenges in managing their personal needs
- ▶ serious behavioural problems
- ▶ a high risk of falls
- ▶ a high risk of long term care placement

Do I qualify financially?

To qualify financially for the program, you must have a net annual household income within category A of the home care income table. "Net Income" is the income identified on Line 236 of the Federal Income Tax Return or in the Notice of Assessment provided by the Canada Revenue Agency.

How do I apply for the Caregiver Benefit?

To apply, call Nova Scotia Health Continuing Care, toll free at 1-800-225-7225. You, your caregiver or someone else (with your consent) can make an application. You will need to provide your name, health card number and some additional information about your situation.

To learn more about the Caregiver Benefit, please visit the Department of Health and Wellness website at novascotia.ca/dhw/ccs.

