



Scope of Assessment: Designation Assessment on Health Care Assistants

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What is happening

The Oversight Office has initiated a process called a **designation assessment** to start collecting information about Health Care Assistants in British Columbia (B.C.).

Through public consultation, engagement, information gathering, and evaluation of risk factors, the designation assessment will inform recommendations given to the Minister of Health on whether to regulate Health Care Assistants under the *Health Professions and Occupations Act* (HPOA).

Read our [Information Bulletin](#) to learn more about the announcement.

How to participate

We want to learn about your thoughts, experiences, and information relevant to Health Care Assistants. There are several ways to participate in the consultation process.

Public Survey

We invite you to complete our online survey. Please [click here](#) to participate. The opportunity to complete the survey will end on **November 20, 2026**.

Written Submission

We welcome written submissions, which can be emailed to engage@hporoo.ca.

Outreach

The Oversight Office has identified several groups and organizations **who may have direct interest of interactions with** Health Care Assistants for targeted consultation. These groups and organizations will be invited to participate in dedicated consultation sessions. If you or your organization has not been contacted for consultation and wish to meet with or present to the Oversight Office regarding the assessment on Health Care Assistants, please contact us at engage@hporoo.ca.



Indigenous consultation

As part of a designation assessment process, the Oversight Office upholds its duty to consult with Indigenous persons who provide similar types of health services as Health Care Assistants, in accordance with Indigenous practices.

The Office is looking to hear from Indigenous Peoples, those who rely on HCAs, those who provide similar services to HCAs, organizations, bodies, and other groups that have insight into Indigenous health practices. If you or your organization has or would like to meet or share information with us, we would be grateful for the opportunity to hear from you. Please contact us at engage@hproo.ca.

Information we are seeking

The designation assessment will evaluate aspects of risks relating to the practice of Health Care Assistants. We are seeking information about:

- what health services Health Care Assistants provide
- where Health Care Assistants provide health services
- the role of Health Care Assistants in determining and leading patient care
- whether Health Care Assistants work with and/or direct other people or professionals during delivery of care
- what type of knowledge and skills Health Care Assistants need to be able to practice safely
- whether there are existing ethics and practice guidelines for Health Care Assistants
- what types of harm can be caused during delivery of care
- existing education and training programs for Health Care Assistants

The Oversight Office will not consider information that is unrelated to Health Care Assistants. This may include:

- general comments about health professional regulation that do not relate to the assessment



- employment related issues
- individual complaints, investigations, or findings, unless they illustrate broader risk issues relevant to the assessment
- requests for personal health advice
- matters outside the scope of the Oversight Office's designation assessment authorities

Who are Health Care Assistants

The term “Health Care Assistant” captures a large group of care providers who use job titles like care aide, community health worker, residential care aide, and long-term care attendant. They work in a variety of settings, including but not limited to publicly funded hospitals, private home care, and long-term care facilities. They are known to provide personal care services, daily living support, physical assistance, mealtime support, and health monitoring among other tasks. It is estimated there are over 58,000 Health Care Assistants employed in B.C.¹

Currently, Health Care Assistants who work in publicly funded health care organizations, such as hospitals or publicly funded long-term care, must be registered with the BC Care Aide & Community Health Worker Registry (the Registry). To register, they must meet certain requirements such as having completed a recognized education program. Health Care Assistants working in other settings, such as private home care, are not required to register.

The Registry's database of Health Care Assistants is not publicly accessible. This means that members of the public are unable to look up if a Health Care Assistant is on the Registry. The Registry can only be accessed by health care employers.

Publicly funded health employers are required to report to the Registry if a Health Care Assistant they employ has allegedly abused a patient, client, or resident. The Registry investigates alleged abuse cases, and may suspend, remove, or reinstate them from the

¹ Choose2Care. “Frequently Asked Questions.” *Choose2Care.ca - BC Health Care Assistants*. Accessed August 31, 2026. <https://www.choose2care.ca/faq/>.



Registry depending on findings.² Patients and clients of Health Care Assistants are unable to submit alleged abuse complaints to the Registry themselves.

Report and recommendations

After the designation assessment is complete, the Oversight Office will complete a report and provide recommendations to the Minister of Health to inform their decision on whether Health Care Assistants should become regulated under the HPOA. Following the Minister of Health's decision on the recommendations, the Oversight Office will publish:

- The designation assessment report, including findings, advice, and recommendations
- Other materials identified during the assessment that may be of interest to the public

The report will include advice and recommendations on several matters:

1. Whether Health Care Assistants should become regulated under the HPOA
2. If regulation under the HPOA is recommended:
 - Whether to designate as a **health profession** or a **health occupation**
 - Advice on regulatory matters such as governance responsibility, reserved titles, restricted activities, and scope of practice

Interim reports

Throughout the designation assessment process, the Oversight Office may publish interim reports on topics such as the status of the assessment, summaries of information gathered, or other relevant updates.

Please visit the [Oversight Office's webpage on designation assessments](#) for any updates and published interim report(s).

² BC Care Aide & Community Health Worker Registry, About us, Ensuring Public Safety. (<https://www.cachwr.bc.ca/about-the-registry/ensuring-public-safety/>).



Authority

The Oversight Office has initiated this designation assessment in accordance with section 17(2) of the HPOA. The designation assessment will be completed in accordance with the [Oversight Office's policies](#), the HPOA, and informed through consultation, information gathering, and an assessment of risk.

The HPOA is the legal framework for regulating health professions and health occupations in B.C. Currently, there are 25 regulated health professionals designated under the HPOA. Health Care Assistants are not regulated under the HPOA as of publishing this document.