



## 2025 Report V2: Special-Care Homes' Inspections Not Frequent Enough

Risk-based inspections and independent follow-ups needed to confirm resident safety and care quality

REGINA—December 9, 2025: In her **2025 Report – Volume 2, Chapter 11**, Provincial Auditor Tara Clemett analyzed the Ministry of Health's process to inspect special-care homes that provide personal and nursing care to residents who can no longer live independently due to health conditions, disabilities, or advanced age. She made **six recommendations**.

The Ministry began inspecting special-care homes in December 2021 and planned to inspect each home within three years. Homes are notified in advance of inspections. We found inspection frequency and announced notice did not align with good practice. The Ministry needs to use a risk-based inspection approach that prioritizes homes with higher likelihoods of poor care outcomes, such as high rates of chemical or physical restraint use, reported critical incidents, or public complaints to determine inspection priorities and frequency.

The Ministry also does not conduct re-inspections to confirm whether homes sufficiently address non-compliance issues.

We found the Ministry did not inspect two homes with very high rates (63.1% and 58.6%) of residents potentially receiving antipsychotic drugs inappropriately (i.e., chemical restraints) until over three years after the inspection program began in 2021–22. Completed inspections at these homes identified critical risks related to chemical restraints.

Further, since 2022, the Ministry has only conducted one independent follow-up inspection, which found repeated critical non-compliance issues related to physical restraint use. Our testing of 16 inspections found it took up to 203 days in some instances to fix critical/high non-compliance issues because of extensions granted, emphasizing the need for the Ministry to conduct follow-up inspections and confirm timely remediation.

Other recommendations include:

- Determining whether the Ministry has sufficient resources to carry out risk-based inspections and re-inspections
- Analyzing inspection results to identify potential areas for improvement and trends in non-compliance to guide corrective action
- Publicly reporting inspection findings to increase transparency and accountability

"Regular, risk-based inspections at special-care homes and timely follow-up are essential to ensure safe, high-quality care of some of Saskatchewan's most vulnerable residents and to maintain public trust in these facilities," said Tara Clemett. "Publicly reporting inspection results would also foster transparency and could encourage homes to take timely action to address issues identified during inspections."

The full Provincial Auditor's **2025 Report – Volume 2** available online at [auditor.sk.ca](https://auditor.sk.ca).

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- In 2023–24, Saskatchewan had the second highest rate (34.8%) of residents in long-term care homes on antipsychotics without a diagnosis of psychosis—well above Canada's overall rate of 24.5%
- At July 2025, 130 out of 161 special-care homes inspected since December 2021; over 30 homes still not visited in the past four years
- We found five homes with critical incidents between April 2023 and June 2024, and yet not inspected until 2025
- Some resident care plans found updated right after the Ministry informed the home of an upcoming inspection
- At July 2025, six inspectors, all based in Regina, are responsible for conducting inspections province wide
- There were 161 special-care homes across the province—125 operated by the Authority; 36 operated by healthcare affiliates at March 31, 2025