

The [Seniors Health Strategic Clinical Network](#) (SH SCN) for Alberta Health Services (AHS) was formed in 2012 and brings together clinicians from all zones and sectors of health care to identify opportunities to enhance health care practices related to the care of older adults. Within this forum, a concern was identified regarding the use of antipsychotic medications in the management of responsive behaviours associated with dementia. The **Resident Assessment Instrument (RAI) - Minimum Data Set (MDS) 2.0 tool** for Alberta Long Term Care (LTC) provided evidence that there was variation across the province in the use of antipsychotic medications within LTC settings.

AHS funded a project through the SH SCN that resulted in the development of provincial guidelines and accompanying resources for the Appropriate Use of Antipsychotics (AUA), for implementation in LTC settings in Alberta. This project was co-sponsored by Seniors Health, and Addiction and Mental Health SCNs. Alberta Health contributed to the development of the AUA Guideline through a Health Technology Assessment review involving AHS clinicians and researchers from both the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary. An extensive literature review of existing Guidelines was commissioned by Alberta Health. As a result of this review, the: [BC Best Practice Guideline for Accommodating and Managing Behavioral and Psychological symptoms of Dementia in Residential Care- A Person Centered Interdisciplinary Approach \(2012\)](#) was chosen to be the starting point for Alberta's AUA guideline development.

The Alberta Guideline on the Appropriate Use of Antipsychotic medications (2013), and accompanying resources, provides clinicians with direction regarding the assessment and management of responsive behaviours associated with cognitive impairment (dementia and delirium) in older adults. Although the guideline was originally developed for implementation within the LTC sector of Continuing Care, it is applicable to other care settings such as Supportive Living, Home Care and Acute Care. The Guideline and resources may also offer direction to clinicians in care approaches for those with mental health issues such as Schizophrenia, while recognizing that long-term use of antipsychotic medications may be clinically appropriate for this population.

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Expert Advisory Working Group

AUA Toolkit Working Group

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