BC Care Providers ASSOCIATION



SUPPORTING AN ACTIVE PARTNERSHIP:

A SERVICE PROVIDER'S GUIDE TO FAMILY & RESIDENT COUNCILS

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The office of BC Care Providers Association & EngAge BC is located on the traditional territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. We are grateful to live, learn and work on these shared lands.

A GREETING FROM THE CEO

Dear BCCPA members,



Each day, we make choices about our routines, surroundings, and activities. Even in arenas of our lives where we may not have complete control – e.g., work – most of us can share our feedback, highlight policies and processes which may not be working and identify solutions. When a transition to long-term care becomes necessary, this does not become less important.

Supporting an Active Partnership: A Seniors' Care Provider's Guide to Resident & Family Councils has been written and released amid a global pandemic, which has tested the long-term care sector in ways which neither I, nor our Association's Board of Directors could have imagined. We have seen families separated, rapid changes to policies, and changes to our entire way of working. I can think of no better time to recommit our sector's commitment to truly hearing the voices of residents and families.

This document is intended to support the development and sustainability of resident and/or family councils across British Columbia's long-term care homes. It does so by supporting operators to implement best practices and navigate pitfalls in this important area.

The guidance offered here is rooted in the perspective that residents can and should contribute to their care and quality of life by sharing their concerns, ideas, and perspectives, and that family, friends and other representatives are central to the delivery of person directed care. This resource has been informed by an exemplary advisory committee, to which I extend my personal gratitude.

Sincerely,

Terry Lake
CEO, BCCPA & EngAge BC

About the Supporting Family & Resident Councils Guide

Residents have the right to contribute to their care and quality of life by sharing their concerns, ideas, and recommendations. Family, friends, and other representatives are also essential to the quality of life of residents living in long-term care. By supporting the establishment of a resident and/or family council, long-term care providers can improve the relationship between staff, residents, and families through dialogue, input and feedback which occurs in a meaningful, respectful and timely way.

BC Care Providers Association (BCCPA) has developed this document to offer a concise summary of how to support family and/or resident councils in long-term care. It is geared specifically to care providers and offers learnings and best practices. The document also includes a companion guide which can be shared with existing and new councils as operators look to develop, encourage, and support them at their sites.

This guide builds on a document previously developed by BCCPA titled, *A Service Provider's Guide to Family & Resident Councils*. In refreshing the guide, BCCPA consulted with a large group of stakeholders including operators of long-term care homes, representatives of regional family council networks, the Family Caregivers of B.C., the Alzheimer Society of B.C., SafeCare BC, the Office of the Seniors Advocate, and the Ministry of Health (please see the acknowledgement section at the end of this guide for a full list of advisory committee members). Our Association is incredibly appreciative of the input, feedback, and expertise of everyone who contributed.

Who is this guide for?

This guide is intended for long-term care providers, including but not limited to general managers, directors of care, and other staff responsible for working with families, residents and/or their councils. Parts of this document (e.g., the best practices section) have been written to be easily shared with residents and family members who are involved in, or who would like to be involved in a resident or Family Council. This guide is informed by the Community Care and Assisted Living Act and the Residential Care Regulation, and coinciding guidance issued by the Ministry of Health.

A note about language

Throughout this guide the term "family" is used to refer to important people in a resident's life – this may include children, spouses, parents, contact persons, friends, and any other person who is important to the resident and who may represent them in a long-term care context. These people may or may not be related by blood or marriage.



PART 1: SUPPORTING RESIDENT AND/OR FAMILY COUNCILS

Background

What is a Family and/or Resident Council? What are they Not?

According to the Ministry of Health, a family and/or resident council is a group of people who either live in a long-term care home, or are the contact person, representative or relatives of a resident, and who meet regularly for a common purpose related to a long-term care home.

Family and/or resident councils exist in three forms:

- Resident councils
- Family councils
- Resident and family councils

The prevalence, structure and approach of councils vary greatly across the province. Because councils are voluntary organizations, each will be slightly different depending on the interests and needs of their members and the residents. Some will be small and informal, and meet occasionally, while others will be larger, more formal, and may meet more often. Some organize special events for residents and may also raise funds to buy something special that will be used by residents that live at the care home. Despite variations all councils exist to promote the collective and individual interests of the people who live in the care home.

One of the key roles that a family and/or resident council can play is to promote improved communication and collaboration between family members and care home staff, and management. According to the Ministry of Health this may involve working collaboratively on projects that enrich the lives of persons in care, making recommendations to decision makers and communicating common concerns and ideas for improvements.

What is a family and/or resident council?

Ideally, family and/or resident councils are:

- Self-led.
- Exist to promote the interest of residents.
- Democratic.

What is a Family and/or Resident Council Not?

Family and/or resident councils are not:

- Run or managed by the care home.
- A decision-making body.
- Akin to a town hall or meeting with the CEO.

According to a study completed by UBC, 68% of long-term care homes have a Family Council and 10% have a Joint Family and Resident Council.

Of these:

- 56% met once a month
- 96% met during the week
- 57% met in the afternoon
- 95% had staff members regularly attend
- 58% were chaired by a staff member
- 57% had a Terms of Reference

The most common focus of meetings were information sharing, advocacy, education, and networking.

Family and/or resident councils can exist alongside other tools which focus on promoting feedback and communication, including:

- A logbook to record communication between families/residents, administration, and staff.
- Clear feedback processes which are communicated to families e.g., who to approach on a particular topic.
- Regular care conferences.
- Focus groups.
- Resident and family surveys.
- Suggestion boxes with procedures for communicating and responding to feedback.
- Town halls.
- Chaplain, or social worker led family support meetings.

Why Should They be Encouraged?

A long-term care home has commitments under the Residential Care Regulation, as it relates to family and resident councils. However, when family and/or resident councils and care homes have relationships which are strong, respectful, and collaborative there are also many other benefits. They also promote person directed care, help establish meaningful connections and relationships throughout the care home, promote resident quality of life and help to mitigate issues early. If they choose to do so, family and/or resident councils can also support fundraising and advocacy efforts.

Regulatory Requirements

In B.C. the Residential Care Regulation under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act (referred to in this document as "the regulation") it is stated that a care home must do the following:

- Provide an opportunity for people living in the care home and their family members to meet with the licensee at least twice each calendar year, where no family or resident council is in place.
- Share "informational materials," such as information, reports, studies or articles with the Council, as prepared by a government, an officer of the legislature, or an organization, educational institution or academic that engages in research on long-term care.
- Provide, the following as requested by the Council:
    - Administrative support, which is provided by an employee who is approved by the Council;
    - Access to a meeting room on the home's premises, for up to three hours, at a time and frequency determined by the Council.
    - Equipment to enable Council members to attend Council meetings by electronic means.
    - Printed Council meeting minutes for distribution to each person in care and each Council member.
- Provide an opportunity for the Council to meet with the licensee at least twice each calendar year.
- Respond in writing to all recommendations brought forward by the Council including by providing a rationale for any decision to reject a recommendation.

- Receive, on behalf of the Council, informational materials directed to the Council from a health authority and forward the informational materials to council members in electronic or paper form, as requested by the Council.
- On request of the minister or the director of licensing, provide the following information:
  - Whether the care home has a resident or family council.
  - Whether the Council has a Chair or Co-Chairs.
  - A description of the frequency of the Council's meetings.
  - A description of the administrative support the licensee provides to the Council.
  - A care home must not attend Council meetings without invitation from the Council or interfere with a member of the Council's participation.
  - There are also many reasons for supporting councils, beyond adhering to regulation, as outlined below.

Alignment with Person Directed Care

As discussed in The Best Day Possible a person-directed philosophy enables and supports a person to achieve goals that are important to them and is responsive to a person's individual abilities, needs, preferences, culture and lifestyle. In this approach, care providers and family members meaningfully engage the resident to express their choices and understand their priorities. By acknowledging the individual's identity, personhood and purpose, staff can celebrate the person and uphold the dignity of the resident.

While family and resident councils are focused on systemic issues, rather than personal ones, fully supporting family and resident councils and acting on their feedback in a timely way is one way which care homes can express their commitment to person-directed care and ensure that processes are consumer directed. Councils can help flag concerns early, and can offer suggestions about changes to things like, food, recreation, and the environment.

Building Strong Connections

Families and friends that stay strongly connected and continue to participate in the care for their family members living in long-term care, enhance the quality of care and the overall experience of residents. Council members can also act as a resource at the home, by meeting with prospective and new families and sharing important information to ensure a smooth transition for families. They also support the families of new residents by sharing their personal experiences, identifying community resources, and helping families know that they are not alone.

Addressing Concerns Early

No matter the long-term care home, systemic issues arise from time to time. If they are not addressed quickly and effectively, residents and family members can become frustrated, and issues can grow out of proportion. A council creates a communication channel, which allows care providers to deal with issues affecting the long-term care home, but also to gather input on new ideas and future changes which may improve resident quality of life. In other words, councils allow for concerns to be addressed proactively, rather than reactively. Note that, while important, councils should not be considered to replace the formal complaints process that should be available in each long-term care home.

Other Benefits

In addition to the reasons already discussed, there are several other reasons to encourage family and/or resident councils:

- Councils are a link to the community and can facilitate programs that benefit both the residents and the community e.g., intergenerational programing.
- Councils can support the service provider by successfully advocating with health authorities and the Ministry of Health.
- Councils can help inform families new to long-term care about existing policies and best practices.
- Councils can help to set a tone of trust, collaboration, and partnership throughout the care home.
- Councils can review and provide feedback on new policies.
- Councils can create a culture of peer support, where information, resources and emotional assistance are shared across family members.
- Council representatives may sit on committees or support other activities important to improving the quality of life of residents – e.g., fundraising.



Family Councils:

- Ensure alignment with regulatory requirements.
- Support person directed care.
- Held build strong connections.
- Help to address concerns early.

The Role of Regional Family Councils

In each health authority Regional Family Councils exist to:

- Advocate on regional, systemic issues.
- Promote awareness of the benefits of resident and/or Family Councils.
- Provide support and advice to existing or emerging councils.
- Promote understanding and awareness of the Residential Care Regulations, Community Care and Assisted Living Act and other relevant statutes, regulations, policies and practices.

Regional councils can be of assistance to emerging or existing councils by:

- Providing guidance to start a council.
- Providing mentoring, support, tools and resources.
- Assisting with troubleshooting at it relates to specific issues.
- Local councils may also bring issues to regional councils to determine whether issues are site specific in nature, or regional in nature. If the latter, they can address regional concerns with the local Health Authority.

As an operator you may invite your regional council to speak to the importance of councils or connect them with interested family members.

Please see section three of this guide for contact information.

Supporting an Active Partnership

What Makes a Family and/or Resident Council Successful?

Supporting a thriving family and/or resident council is not without its challenges. A study conducted at the UBC School of Nursing indicated that the most common difficulties associated with creating a successful family council include:

- A perceived lack of interest.
- A lack of understanding of the purpose of a family council.
- Ensuring consistency of family over time – e.g., attrition due to the death of a family member.

Another challenge, not noted in the study is a lack of a communication strategy to make new residents/families aware of opportunities to participate in, or create a council.

Conversely, facilitators of a successful Family Council included:

- Providing opportunities to connect and provide peer support.
- Offering learning opportunities – e.g., guest speakers.
- Constructive attitudes.

Continue reading for more suggestions to support resident and/or Family Councils.

Together or Apart?

A Family Council or Resident Council may exist separately or together. While the format will depend on the particular care home (including factors such as interest, size, resident composition, etc.) there are many clear advantages to supporting separate councils:

- Residents may need more support to participate in a council, due to physical and cognitive challenges.
- Family members may "dominate" conversations in a composite model.
- Scheduling needs and preferences may be different for the two groups.
- Topics of interest may not align.
- Offering separate meetings allows for dementia-friendly approaches to be implemented when seeking feedback (see below).



The resident voice is critically important. Individuals on resident councils may (although not always) require more support to participate than members of Family Councils. This may include:

- Offering additional administrative support.
- Providing agendas and notes in large fonts.
- Offering frequent reminders.
- Taking time for alternate forms of communication – e.g., non-verbal communication, yes/no responses, etc.
- Keeping agendas focused on only a few items and providing a quiet space to hold meetings, away from other distractions.
- Providing a staff person to support meeting facilitation (with the consent of the group).
- Allowing a support person to attend along with the resident, including a staff person if requested by the resident.

Resources for Meaningfully Engaging People Living with Dementia

People living with dementia may need support to participate in resident councils, below are resources which offer guidance to doing this in a meaningful, respectful way:

- The Dementia Engagement and Empowerment Project: Involving People Living with Dementia as Members of a Steering Group or Advisory
- The Alzheimer Society of Canada: Meaningful Engagement of People Living with Dementia

Other things to consider:

- A person living with dementia may benefit from extra support to participate in a council meeting – e.g., a family member or council member who can meet with them one-on-one before the meeting to review the agenda and help prepare their feedback and debrief with them after the meeting.
- If attending full committee meetings isn't feasible for a resident(s) living with dementia, it may be possible to consider other engagement approaches. For example, if a meeting will focus on suggesting changes to the care home's menu, it may be possible to seek targeted feedback, which can then be considered by the Council. In these cases asking yes/no or close-ended questions can be helpful - e.g., Did you like this meal? What would you prefer: A or B? etc.
- If possible, have staff or volunteers with facilitation training and knowledge of dementia support resident council meetings.

What Makes a Family and/or Resident Council Successful?

Building Trust

Many well-established family and resident councils, and the staff who work with them, will indicate that trust is critical to supporting an active partnership. This can be particularly important as interested parties work to establish a new council. The following are tips for developing trust between management and an emerging, or existing council:

- Start by discussing expectations, scope of responsibilities and boundaries.
- Assist by offering a draft terms of reference for the Council.
- Make support available, as required by the regulation, but communicate that management appreciates that the Council is self-led and will endeavour to be respectful of that.
- Indicate that staff are willing to attend meetings, at the request of the group but will respect the Council's wishes to meet without staff present if it chooses to do so.
- Establish a regular time to meet with the Council, receive feedback and share updates.
- Demonstrate that the Council is an important partner by recognizing them at events, asking for feedback on projects, including them in decision making, etc. Consider inviting them to attend an annual board meeting, if appropriate.
- Communicate clearly about what outcomes are and are not possible, due to factors such as funding, regulations, staffing etc. Indicate that you are willing to work together to find creative solutions if the desired results are not feasible.
- Connect the Council with their Regional Association of Family Councils for guidance and mentorship (see the section above for more information about the role of regional associations).
- Recommend meaningful agenda items for the Council's consideration.
- Make resources available for Councils to share with their peers who may be experiencing grief or caregiver stress (see part three of this document).
- Share changes about administrative and staffing changes in a timely way.

What Can Long-Term Care Providers do to Encourage Councils?

Encouragement and enthusiasm from the care home sends the message to residents, families, and staff that family and/or resident councils are important and fully supported by management. The following are actions which can be taken to show your support.

If a Council is Not Yet in Place:

- Ensure that the pre-admission and admission handbook includes wording indicating that the care home supports the establishment of a resident and/or Family Council and how the Council can be contacted.
- Conduct a survey amongst residents, families and friends to identify interest in the concept of a council.
- Approach specific residents and family members that you believe will be interested in organizing a council – the task of establishing a council relies on enthusiasm and buy-in from residents and family members. In doing so, be aware of diversity, while avoiding tokenism.

- Include a regular message in town hall meetings and correspondence such as newsletters, indicating that management supports the establishment of a resident and/or family council and how they can be contacted.
- Consider inviting a representative of your local Regional Association of Family Councils to attend a town hall meeting to discuss the benefits of a establishing a council.

While a Council is Becoming Established:

- Contact the Regional Association of Family Councils in your area. They can provide guidance, insights, tips and even assist with coordination as a new council is forming.
- Hold an introductory meeting with residents, families and friends to discuss the concept of a council, roles, benefits etc. – this can take place in conjunction with a regularly scheduled event to capture a larger audience.
- Provide the Council with information on possible structures - this may range from being very informal with a Chairperson and Recorder who writes up the minutes of the meeting, to a more formal structure with elected officers, formal committees, quorum requirements, terms of reference etc. See part two of this guide for sample documents.
- Create a Policy and Procedure document outlining the long-term care home's support for Councils and the related corporate procedures surrounding this.
- Designate a staff liaison (which is approved by the Council) to support the Council and educate and regularly inform staff of Council updates. Ideally, this person will be genuinely interested in the role of Resident/Family Councils. As required by the regulation, this liaison would be responsible for providing/arranging, the following as requested by the council:
  - Administrative support.
  - Access to a meeting room on the home's premises, for up to three hours, at a time and frequency determined by the Council.
  - Equipment to enable Council members to attend council meetings by electronic means.
  - Printed Council meeting minutes for distribution to each person in care and each Council member. ·
- Ask the emerging Council what additional support they may need and try to accommodate it, avoid overpromising. Examples of assistance include:
  - Orienting families to the Council at the time of move-in, and at other junctures.
  - Printing and posting notices, agendas, etc.
  - Making AV equipment available.
  - Providing access to virtual meeting platform such as Zoom.
  - Creating a portal on the care home's website and posting minutes, etc.
  - Aiding in setting up before and cleaning-up after meetings (e.g., tables and chairs), etc.
  - Organizing guest speakers.
  - Providing extra support or hospitality for occasional, special events, including tablecloths or refreshments, as resources allow.
- Educate staff on the concept and role of a Council at an in-service or education session for staff, so that all staff know what a council is and how they can and direct any questions appropriately to either management or a designated staff person.
- As outlined in the regulation, offer virtual options for holding and attending meetings (see the section on virtual meetings in part two of this guide for more information).
- Work with the Council to determine the best way to reach families and optimize attendance at meetings and events. This may include posting on notice boards, including information in regular newsletters or posting on the organization's website and/or Facebook group.

- Survey families to select the most appropriate times for meetings and information sessions.
- When collecting consent to add residents and family members to newsletters, ask if they consent to having their information shared with the family and/or resident council directly, so that they can be contacted about council meetings and receive other news and updates.

If a Council is Already Active:

- Hold ongoing training for staff, including tips on how to effectively communicate with residents and family.
- Attend a meeting in person and/or virtually, at the invitation of the Council. The Council may also invite other staff, ideally through the administration, to attend a portion of meetings, to learn about their work.
- Offer feedback on the agenda, if requested.
- Provide expertise and resources at meetings, if requested, to educate families, answer specific questions, etc.
- Source possible guest speakers on topics of interest to the residents, families, and friends.
- Facilitate an annual resident/family survey to evaluate the functioning and effectiveness of the Council and support the Council in any areas highlighted by the survey as requiring action.
- Assist the Council to develop a brochure introducing the Council to new families. Include the brochure in the home's welcome package and give the resident and family the opportunity to reach out to the Council. Alternatively, consider dedicating a section to councils in the Resident/New Family Handbook – provide information on what a council is, their role, benefits and contact names for Residents and families to connect with the Council.
- Involve council members in providing feedback, especially on new protocols, and changes in care e.g., menu and dining experience feedback, recreation, events, and other areas of daily life. Invite the council to take a tour of the care home to collect their feedback.
- Provide bulletin boards or brochure rack space in various areas of the home to the Council.
- Include a "Council Corner" in electronic newsletters for information on the Council.
- Maintain a "Family Council Portal" on the care home's website where minutes, resources, etc. can be posted.
- Invite residents and families to participate and/or become members on various committees in the organization.
- Include Council members in quality improvement activities/initiatives.
- Respond in writing to all recommendations brought forward by the Council including by providing a rationale for any decision to reject a recommendation.

This list is by no means exhaustive. Consult with your family and/or resident Council for their thoughts and feedback about how management can best support them in their efforts.



Supporting Diversity: Consider your organization's LGBTQ2+ competency

Although finding accurate statistics can be challenging, it is estimated that anywhere between three and 10 per cent of the population are lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, two-spirited, or transgender. Many LGBTQ2+ seniors are fearful of entering a care home because they feel that they will have to hide their sexuality or moderate their gender expression. This may affect how willing residents or family members are to participate on a family and/or resident council.

Residents who are LGBTQ2+ may also be estranged from biological family as a result of "coming out," in this case, many older LGBTQ2+ people will have built a close network of friends, sometimes referred to as a family of choice, or "fictive kin," they may be concerned that they will not be recognized as family or supported to participate in a Family Council.

Indicating that your care home is LGBTQ2+ competent and that all family and/or resident council members can expect to contribute to a safe place can help participants to feel comfortable.

Consult BCCPA's Aging with Pride page for resources for ideas you can use to improve your organization's LGBTQ2+ competency. In the context of a family and/or resident council, this may mean reviewing any forms, policies, and procedures, and ensuring that staff are coached in supporting older adults and their family members that identify as LBGTQ2+. It may also be finding ways to subtly indicate to residents and their supporters that you are an inclusive organization (e.g., displaying the pride flag on your website, or in your newsletter). Ensuring that intake and other forms, policies and procedures are written in a way which avoids overt or covert discrimination or marginalization (e.g., binary gender options) is also important.

Navigating Challenges

Supporting a Council to be Fully Independent

Scenario:

When you took over the executive director role at a new care home, a Resident Council was in place, but no Family Council existed. In efforts to indicate your support, you promoted the value of starting one through your newsletter, the community Facebook group and put out a call for volunteers at your site's quarterly townhall.

A small group of family members came forward and indicated that, while they would attend the meetings, they didn't feel like they had the time or necessary expertise to take on the role of Chair. In the past, there had been several attempts to start a council, but each time things quickly fizzled out. They tell you that there is one individual who has expressed an interest as acting as Chair, but that they feel uncomfortable with that idea – noting that the person is focused only on their own experience, is dismissive of others and has a reputation of bullying staff.

Possible approach:

In many cases, establishing a new council can be difficult. Family members can be unwilling to volunteer because they have busy schedules or because they have a lack of confidence in their own abilities. Internal politics can act as a further barrier to starting and sustaining a council. In some cases, a phased approach may be helpful. Potential steps include:

- Explaining to the interested parties that family councils should be self-led, exist to promote the interest of residents, and democratic, but that you are willing to support the Council on an interim basis, as they get started. Being clear about expectations, roles and timelines from the beginning can be helpful.
- Support the Council to set their first agenda, establish a terms of reference and develop a Code of Conduct.
- Coordinate a meeting to introduce the interested family members to their Regional Family Council contacts, so that they can receive coaching and resources.
- Recommend that a Co-Chair model be considered as to share the work involved.
- Offer to attend the first few meetings to support the new Co-Chairs.
- Set up regular times to meet with the new Co-Chairs.
- Sometimes, it may be necessary to "step away" from the Council, as to help members build the confidence necessary to become self-sustaining.

Navigating Staff Attendance

Scenario:

Recently, the Family Council at your long-term care home elected a new Chair. The Chair, who is caring for his wife, previously ran a Council at the care home where his mother lived. He is shocked when you let him know that staff do not typically attend meetings.

Possible approach:

As indicated in the regulation, care home staff must not attend council meetings without invitation from the Council. However, having leadership attend meetings can be a good way to build community, support information sharing and build awareness of the roles of care home staff. In some cases, councils will also invite staff, by way of leadership, to attend meetings to introduce themselves or speak about their work. However, having staff in attendance can create fear of reprisal, and can hamper discussions which may take place without staff participation.

While other staff may be invited to attend, it is most appropriate for that invitation to come from the Council through the administration, it should be clear that while other staff may be invited to attend meetings to share information, concerns should be addressed to administration or their appointee directly.

If staff are present, ensure that there is always an "in camera" component of the agenda, where all staff are asked to leave.

It may be helpful to explain to the Chair, that only attending on invitation is intended to allow space for the Council to be self-directed.

Responding to Challenging Emotions

Scenario:

At your monthly meeting with the Council Chair, they explain that meetings have been challenging to keep on track lately. One person has been dominating discussions with individual concerns, and attendance has been dropping as a result.

Possible approach:

It is not unusual for Council members to bring personal concerns to meetings. This is not inherently problematic, as meetings can be a good place for family members to seek guidance from seasoned members, to determine if something is a personal or systemic issue, and to seek emotional support from others. However, responding to the emotional or individual needs of members can be difficult, particularly when it interferes with the meeting itself.

Below are some actions which may be helpful:

- Support the Chair to understand the role which guilt and grief can play in the behaviour of family members.
- Offer to meet one-on-one with the family member who is having challenges.
- Bring in a guest speaker to discuss issues such as caregiver guilt, the progression of dementia, or what to expect following a transition to a long-term care home.
- Connect the Chair with their local Regional Association of Family Councils for further guidance and support.



PART 2: FAMILY AND/OR RESIDENT COUNCIL COMPANION GUIDE

Best Practices

While each care home is unique, having resources and templates available for new family and/or resident councils can be helpful in ensuring that they are able to launch successfully. The following information regarding best practices, and the tools and resources which accompanies it, can be shared by care providers with an existing family and/or resident council, or with individuals interested in starting a council.

The initial Meeting

- Invite all residents, family members, friends and other resident representatives to ensure an inclusive and positive start.
- Consider whether holding a meeting virtually is feasible (see the section below for more information on virtual meetings).
- Ensure that the notice of the meeting is posted on all notice boards in the home and sent out in the regular newsletter/mail out to families. If possible, consider posting this information on the home's website or Facebook group.
- Provide ample notice for panning purposes – i.e., 2-3 weeks.
- Provide an agenda. This will help to formalize the meeting and will provide timelines to guide it. Consider sharing it with management for feedback.
- Consider wearing nametags. Alternatively, if the meeting is taking place virtually, ensure that attendees are asked, and know how to change their names on the virtual platform which is being used – this will also assist with minute taking.
- Generate enthusiasm by ensuring people have a positive experience at the meeting.
- Ensure that a high-level explanation of what a family and/or resident council is, and what the goal is can provide motivation. Consider inviting management to speak to this and how the efforts of the Council can benefit a resident's quality of life.
- Consider inviting an engaging guest speaker that will provide first-hand experience of participating on/leading a council, e.g., a representative from your local Regional Association of Family Councils, a member of an established council from another home, or a family member that has experience with another council. The more informative and applicable the meeting, the more people will want to keep on participating.
- Invite residents, families and friends attending to share ideas and actively participate – the more participation is generated the more people will feel they are part of the Council and will want to attend in the future. Show the participants that the Council is not just another social event but rather a place for residents, families, and friends to generate information, have questions and issues dealt with and hold meaningful discussions, to improve the quality of life of residents.
- Create a Code of Conduct, which will help to shape expectations for how participants will participate in meetings.
- Develop a process for addressing issues which arise, where there are conflicting opinions. Ensure participants are aware that the Council is not a decision-making body.
- Determine the date of the next meeting, or a regular reoccurring time. If all participants are comfortable with technology an online Doodle Poll may help to do this.
- Enlist volunteers to organize and run regular Council meetings. They should be chosen by the residents, families and friends attending and may be temporary at first until the Council is fully established.

- Prepare a sign-in sheet to record names and contact details of all attendees and interested parties. This will be useful in following up to get feedback, as well as to identify volunteers that can be approached directly. If you are holding meetings virtually, some platforms allow for attendance lists to be generated following the meeting.
- The care home can provide, the following as requested by the council:
    - Administrative support, which is provided by an employee who is approved by the Council;
    - Access to a meeting room on the home's premises.
    - Equipment to enable Council members to attend council meetings electronically.
    - Printed council meeting minutes.

Meeting Structure

- Elect a chair. Consider electing Co-Chairpersons that will support one another in organizing meetings and council activities. This is helpful in case one Chairperson is no longer able to participate (continue reading for the qualities which should be considered when electing a chair).
- Hold regular monthly meetings, except in the summer when many people are away, on the same day and time as this helps with regular attendance and continuity.
- Some councils choose to have staff attend on a regular basis; others prefer to forward on the meeting minutes following the meeting. Discuss the ongoing role of staff with attendees. Consider appointing a staff liaison that can be the direct contact to support the Council. It is important that the Council is run by residents and families for the benefit of residents.
- Effective meetings will play a big part in the success of the Council. Consider selecting a Chairperson with experience running meetings.
- Agendas are an effective tool to communicate the goal of the meeting and help focus the discussion. Provide an opportunity for participants to add items to the agenda at the start of the meeting and then stick to the agenda. Consider designating a volunteer to hand out the agenda and direct any late comers.
- Take minutes of the meetings and distribute them in a timely manner for review before the next meeting, this should include sharing with care home management. Even if people can't attend, they may wish to review the ongoing discussion and outcomes to stay connected and informed.
- With minutes less, is often more. They should:
    - Be as objective as possible.
    - Not include names, unless necessary to indicate the person responsible for an action item. For example, minutes should not say, "Mr. Smith expressed a wish to have more recreational activities for residents." Instead, they may read, "a discussion was held about the need for more recreational activities for residents. The Chairperson will bring this to the attention of management." This helps council members feel safe in sharing their experiences, concerns, and ideas.
    - Clearly detail any action items and outcomes.
- If meetings are conducted in a virtual format and most participants are comfortable with technology, consider using tools such as Google Docs, Google Hangouts, SLACK and so forth to share and store information.
- Celebrate successes! Consider adding a "kudos" or "positive stories" section to the agenda, where the Council can identify positive things that have occurred or acknowledge staff members who are making a difference (e.g., one Family Council reported selecting a special staff person and writing a thank-you card to the person as part of each meeting).

Tips for Holding a Virtual Council Meeting

Virtual meetings have become more common since COVID-19 and have many benefits, including being more convenient to attend for people with busy schedules, or who do not live locally. Here are some tips for Councils looking to explore this format:

- Many virtual meeting platforms exist including Zoom, MS Teams and Google Hangouts. Explore which format is most familiar to most participants. The home may be able to assist with a membership, or by providing access to an existing account.
- Designate one Council member to set up the meeting and manage any technical challenges on the day – it may be best if this person is someone other than the Chair/Co-Chair, or minute taker.
- Encourage anyone who is less familiar with virtual meetings to join a few minutes early. Alternatively, recommend that they have a family member who is more comfortable with technology support their participation.
- Make resources or tutorials on using the virtual platform available in advance of the meeting (YouTube offers many quick and easy to follow resources). Have a designated person available to answer any questions.
- At the beginning of the meeting remind all participants to mute themselves when they are not speaking.
- Consider using online tools such as Google Docs, Google Hangouts, SLACK etc. to share and store Council information. Be aware of privacy considerations.

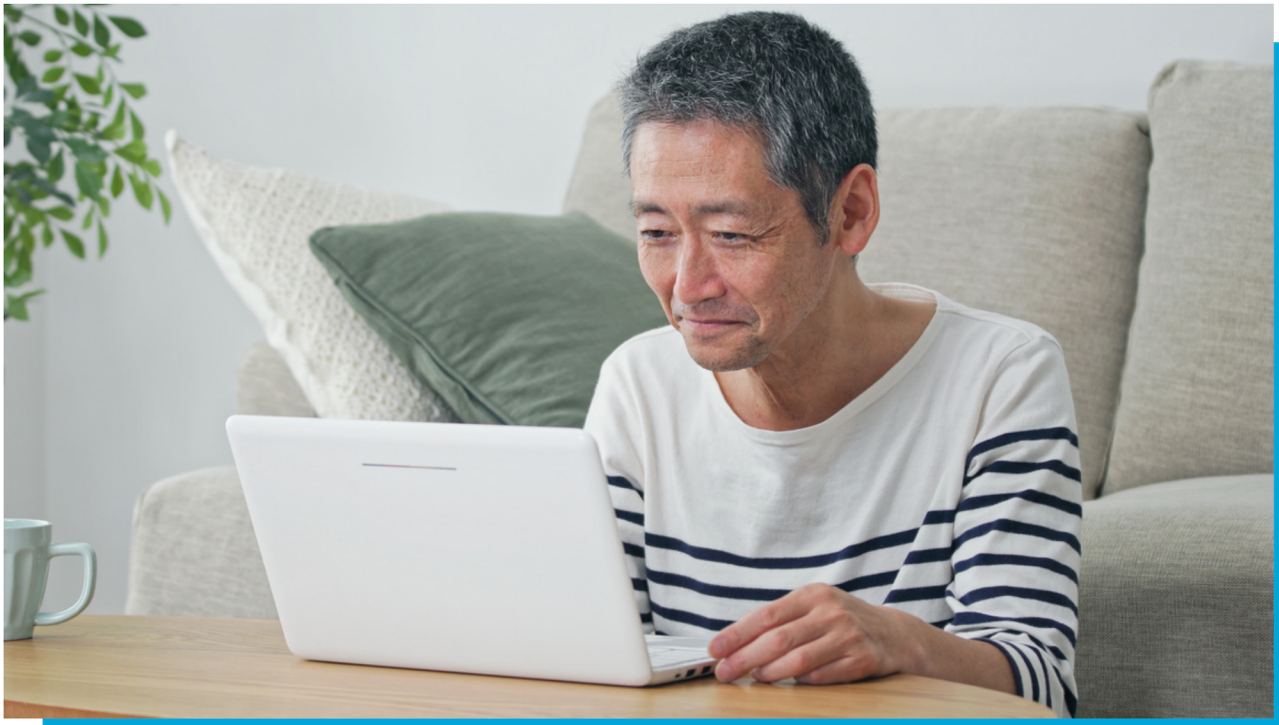
See Family Councils Ontario's Digital Success Toolkit here.

Suggestions for Successfully Chairing a Meeting

- At the beginning of the meeting, you may wish to review the Code of Conduct, along with housekeeping items or other "ground rules," or guidelines for discussion (e.g., maintaining a safe space, sharing the time, etc.). You may also choose to include a land acknowledgement, in the spirt of truth and reconciliation.
- To be respectful of everyone's time, begin and end on time.
- As Chair, be as objective and fact based as possible.
- Speak clearly and concisely.
- Keep the meeting focused by addressing issues of lesser importance quickly.
- Ensure that you are as informed as possible about regulations, legislation and processes which relate to long-term care. This may include familiarizing yourself with the:
  - Community Care and Assisted Living Act.
  - Residential Care Regulation.
  - Residents' Bill of Rights.
  - Long-term care complaints process.

If you are not familiar with the systemic framework, make sure that someone else attending Council meetings can contribute this kind of information.

- Ensure that decisions or action items are recorded by the minute taker. Reaffirm the direction or action with the group to ensure consensus.
- Keep discussions solution focused by using phrases such as:
  - "I can appreciate why that feels concerning, do you have any suggestions about addressing this?"
  - "Perhaps we can brainstorm on this as a Council. Has anyone heard of approaches which have worked well at other homes?"
  - "I think I understand the issue now. Why don't I take this back to the administration?"
- Create a culture where participants are expected to share the time. The following phrases may be helpful:
  - "Thank you for sharing. Has anyone else had this experience?"
  - "Your experience is important, thank you for communicating this to the group. I want to make sure others also have a chance to speak about their perspectives."
- Where possible, use visual aids.
- Start a "Parking Lot" where conversations that come up during the meeting, but which need more time or depth can be recorded and then can be addressed appropriately (e.g., through one-on-one discussions, by adding them to a future agenda, etc.).
- Delegate to others if issues arise during the meeting – e.g., late arrivals, technology issues, etc.



Selecting a Chair/Co-Chair

The Chair/Co-Chairs serves, and is accountable to, the rest of the Family Council executive, care home administration and all residents/families at large. When a council is becoming established, Council members may not yet know each other. For this reason, most councils begin with temporary, or interim volunteer officers, who serve until regular elections can be held.

The primary role of the Chair/Co-Chair is to ensure the effective functioning of the Family Council in its role of advocating for quality of care and quality of life for all residents at the care home. The Chair should be committed to making sure that all meeting attendees have a voice at the table, and that no single person dominates discussion. They should ensure that lines of communication with everyone in the care home remain as positive as possible.

They should have the following attributes and qualifications and/or be willing to learn the following skills:

- A family member of a resident living in the long-term care home.
- Collaborative in nature, experience working with people who have different perspectives and an interest in the viewpoints of others.
- Good communication skills.
- Experience facilitating and/or chairing meetings and/or previous team/group/association member experience (e.g., experience from employment, participating on a strata, etc.).
- A sound knowledge of the long-term care home, and the systemic framework in which it exists.
- Ability to keep information confidential.

Chairs can expect to volunteer 10-15 hours a month. They have no formal authority to direct care home leadership, or to enter contracts, for example.

Having Co-Chairs or alternating leadership is often a good idea. This helps members build leadership skills and ensures that a variety of perspectives and approaches are brought forward. Often terms are set to two years.

Chairs/Co-Chairs are encouraged to reach out to their Regional Family Council Association for guidance.

Terms of Reference

A Terms of Reference is a document created by a council that governs the way the Council operates. Having an official Terms of Reference document provides structure to the actions and functions of the Council and can be helpful in avoiding any conflicts between Council members around the procedures the Council follows. It can solidify the relationship between the Council and the care home, if the Terms of Reference is also formally accepted by the home. A sample is provided below.

There are a variety of topics that can be addressed in this document, for example:

- The name of the Council.
- The philosophy of the Council.
- The purpose of the Council.
- Membership participation and eligibility.
- Involvement in committees.
- Officers and their duties.
- Election of officers.
- Meeting frequency, etc.
- The process for taking and circulating the agenda and minutes.
- Any amendments of the Terms of Reference/review dates.

Addressing Hot Topics

In your Terms of Reference consider addressing hot topics such as:

What will happen once the resident represented by a council member has passed away?

Given the average length of residency in long-term care, it is likely that Council members will experience their loved one passing away during their time on the Council. Each council's own Terms of Reference should clarify the length of time that said council member can remain on the council or serve on the executive. The establishment of a "Code of Conduct" further equips the council to be able to effectively deal with any disruptions by a member or members which may hinder the Council's ability to operate efficiently and with the purpose of improving quality of care and quality of life of the residents in care, and the annual democratic elections of officers will determine who the membership votes into and out of office.

While the Council's Terms of Reference should clarify the length of time that said council member can remain on the council or continue to serve on the executive, exceptions should be considered if the council cannot find a volunteer to take over his/her executive position or the said member is widely recognized as someone who visits and supports many residents in care. Those individuals can continue to be of value for all residents or can contribute in many ways because they have lived experience given the role that said Council member plays within the facility. Care home administration can help build and sustain both membership in the council and interest in serving on the council executive team through a robust promotion of involvement in the Family Council.

How will individual resident issues be addressed if they come up at a meeting?

For privacy reasons, as well as operational reasons it is important that issues discussed at council meetings remain focused on residents as a group, rather than on individual issues or care plans of specific residents. The Terms of Reference should make a specific mention in its purpose statement that it advocates and speaks for residents as a group and cannot talk to the care provider or any authority on behalf of an individual resident or family.

How will disagreements be managed?

From time-to-time disagreements between Council members are likely to occur. Consider how differences of opinions will be addressed in a productive way. The Council's approach may be integrated into the Council's Code of Conduct and/or Terms of Reference, and may include things like remaining respectful, and listening with an open mind, and how Council decisions will be made when there is not a clear consensus (e.g., under what circumstances a vote will occur, when outside perspectives will be sought, etc.). A sample complaints process has been included, here, for your reference.

How will conflicts of interests be addressed?

The Council needs to consider situations where a Council member, or participant may be in a position of a conflict of interest. For example, what will happen if a staff member is also supporting a resident and would like to participate on the Council? Typically, disclosure of a conflict to all parties involved can sufficiently avoid any conflict of interest or perceived bias in any decision the Council makes.

Ways to Encourage Council Participation

The biggest challenge that a Council faces is the ability to generate and sustain itself. There are several reasons for this, including residents passing away, lack of clear expectations, and the perception that Council meetings and actions do not lead to meaningful actions/results.

The following are some ways to encourage ongoing participation:

- Enthusiastic participation and volunteers on the Council.
- Flexibility in format – e.g., making hybrid or virtual attendance options available.
- A strong Chairpersons/Co-Chairpersons, which lead the Council in a way which is organized and action oriented, and who conducts meetings in a way which is respectful, well organized and solutions focused.
- Regular formal and informal education for residents, families, and staff about the value of the Council.
- Interesting and relevant guest speakers that pique the interest of Council members and provide valuable information to their situations.
- Broad invitation to new families, accommodating bilingual communication etc.
- Providing a safe environment for families and friends to communicate without perceived threat of retaliation towards residents.
- Participation of Council members in the operations of the home – e.g. participating in food audits and being on the Food Committee.
- Visibility of the Council – e.g., notices on bulletin boards, information in newsletters, involvement at care home events.

- Publicly highlighting the results or actions that have come from the Council's work – e.g., changes to policy or practice.
- An established process for inviting new members to participate.
- Ongoing collaboration and support from the care home and staff, including acceptance and respect if the Council wishes to meet without any staff involvement.
- Encouraging diversity on the Council.



Tools & Templates

Sample Terms of Reference

<FAMILY AND/OR RESIDENT COUNCIL NAME> TERMS OF REFERENCE

PURPOSE

The purpose of the **<Family and/or Resident Council Name>** is to enhance the quality of life, well-being and happiness of all Residents at the **<Care Home Name>**.

FUNCTIONS

- To act as an advocate for the residents, as a community.
- To facilitate communication between families, staff and residents by working collaboratively with administration to identify collective concerns and offer potential solutions.
- To provide support for families and friends of residents by providing a comfortable, confidential and secure forum for discussion.
- To promote communication between families, staff and administration.
- To arrange educational opportunities for families and friends of residents.
- To participate and provide input to the development of policies, accreditation and special programs in **<Care Home Name>**, at the invitation of administration.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information will be considered confidential. Participants should note that Council representatives cannot talk to the care provider or any authority on behalf of an individual resident or family.

MEMBERSHIP

- Membership is open to all family members, friends, and other persons of importance and representatives of residents of **<Care Home Name>** who wish to participate in decisions affecting the daily lives of residents.
- The Family and/or resident Council will **<request administration to appoint a staff member to serve as liaison between administration and Council/establish regular meetings with senior leadership at the site occurring every x months/as needed>**. A representative from administration may attend a portion of each Family and/or Resident Council meeting for updates and communication with the Council and/or will receive meeting minutes. At each meeting there will be an "in-camera" component where all staff are asked to leave the room.
- Family and friends of a deceased Resident of **<Care Home Name>** are welcome to continue their involvement with the Council for a transitionary period of **<x months>** but will no longer be eligible to vote, or to act as a Chair or Officer of the Council.
- All Council members and guests are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

All members are eligible for election. Positions to be elected are:

- Chair
- Co-chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer (if required)
- If one of the elected officers can no longer fill the position, an Interim Officer will be elected for the remaining term of office.
- Staff of <**Care Home Name>** are ineligible to be Officers on the Council.

MEETINGS

- Meetings will be held on **<day and time>.** Additional meetings will be called by the Chair/Co-Chair as required. Meetings can be changed or cancelled by the Chair with **<x days>** notice to members.

AGENDA & MINUTES

- An agenda will be prepared for each meeting and will be circulated <x days> in advance, along with related documents and the previous meeting's minutes. There will be an opportunity at each meeting to submit additional agenda items.
- Minutes will be taken to record the proceedings of each meeting. Minutes will be distributed to Council members, the Staff Liaison and to the Administrator. The Secretary will be responsible for these functions.

COMPLAINTS PROCESS

- From time-to-time disagreements between Council members are likely to occur. This process aims to ensure that differences of opinions will be addressed in a productive way and exists in addition to the Council's Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct.
- All Council members are required to remain respectful and listen with an open mind.
- When there is not a clear consensus the following will occur:
    - Any member of the Council may ask the Chair to consider a vote.
    - The Chair will identify if a vote on a given issue is necessary (which may occur anonymously).
    - Should the disagreement be between the Chair and a member of the Council, the Chair will recluse themselves from decision making and any member of the executive may bring the issue forward to a vote.
    - Should no solution be considered possible, or no consensus be achieved through a vote either the Administrator or the Regional Association of Family Councils will be consulted as a third party.

AMENDMENTS TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

- The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually by the Council. Any amendments put forward by the Council should be submitted to the Administration for comment before

ratifying the changes **<Care Home>**.

- Initial Date of Terms of Reference: **<XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX> Date of Latest Revision: <XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX>**

Sample Code of Conduct

The purpose of the **<Family and/or Resident Council Name>** is to enhance the quality of life, well-being and happiness of all Residents at the **<Care Home Name>**.

This document sets out the standards of behaviour expected of Council Members. In agreeing to be part of the Council, each member is agreeing to:

1. Strive to attend all meetings.
2. Prepare for the meeting by reading the agenda, background materials, and any relevant emails.
3. Talk to the Chair before the meeting to seek any necessary clarifications.
4. Arrive on time and stay to the end, if possible.
5. Participate fully in the meeting by:
    - listening respectfully to what others have to say, avoiding interrupting and keeping an open mind.
    - contributing positively to the discussions.
    - trying to be concise when speaking.
    - being open to feedback from members and responding respectfully.
    - not engaging in side conversations during the meeting.
    - educating themselves on virtual meeting etiquette.
6. Have the best interests of the organization and its residents (as a community) in mind at all times.
7. Draw attention to any potential conflicts of interest that may arise in the meeting. Full disclosure is important.
8. Fulfill any responsibilities assigned to you at the meeting and be prepared to report back on your progress, within the timeline given, at the next meeting.
9. Adhere to the mission of the Council.
10. Adhere to the terms of reference established by the Council.
11. Always represent the Council in a respectful manner.
12. Respect and maintain confidentiality of information at all times.

Should any member significantly or repeatedly act in contrary to the code of contact, they may be asked by the Council Executive to no longer participate in Council affairs.

Date: _____
Signed: _____
Print Name: _____

Sample Meeting Sign-in Sheet

< NAME OF FAMILY AND/OR RESIDENT COUNCIL > SIGN-IN SHEET

Date of meeting:

Venue:

Please sign your name in the form below. By signing below you agree as follows:
I agree to conduct myself in a way which is respectful of other participants and staff and is in keeping with the Council Code of Conduct. This includes:

- Respecting privacy and confidentiality.
- Practicing non-judgement.
- Sharing speaking time.
- Approaching issues in a solution focused, collaborative way.
- Focusing on concerns affecting all residents, rather than individuals.

I agree that **< NAME OF FAMILY AND/OR RESIDENT COUNCIL >** may include my contact details as an attendee in the minutes of the meeting and that my contact details only be used in relation to **< NAME OF FAMILY AND/OR RESIDENT COUNCIL >** affairs."

Name	Resident/family or staff	Phone #	Email Address

Sample Evaluation Questionnaire

Adapted from the Ontario Family Council's Program, the following questionnaire can help Council's executive perform a self evaluation. These results can be discussed with care home staff, in order to make improvements:

QUESTION	YES	NO
IS YOUR COUNCIL SELF-LED AND INDEPENDENT?		
Does your Council meet regularly?		
Does your Council meet monthly?		
Does your Council have officers/lead volunteers who are family or friends of Residents?		
Does your Council have written Terms of Reference?		
Do meetings have a planned agenda and do all meeting participants know what is on the agenda?		
Are minutes (or notes) kept of meetings and retained for future reference?		
Do you post minutes or new of Council meetings in the home or publish them in a newsletter?		
HOW DO FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF RESIDENTS PARTICIPATE IN THE COUNCIL?		
Are most families and friends aware of the Council and its purpose?		

Are Council meetings planned and led by families and friends and not by staff?		
Is your Council financially independent of the Home?		
Is information about your Council readily available to families who are new to the Home?		
Is there a core group of families and friends who attend most meetings and seem interested?		
Do you think that most Council members feel they can speak honestly at meetings without fear?		
Does the Council have the opportunity to meet without staff or administration present unless requested?		
Are Council projects and tasks somewhat divided evenly among Council members?		
Are minutes (or notes) kept of meetings and retained for future reference?		
Do you post minutes or new of Council meetings in the Home or publish them in a newsletter?		
HOW DO LONG-TERM CARE HOME STAFF PARTICIPATE IN THE COUNCIL?		
Do you think most of the Home's staff are aware of the existence and purpose of the Council?		
Is information about the Council included in staff orientation, in-service training or staff meetings		
Has a specific staff person been chosen to work with the Council?		
If the staff person working with the Council were to change, would the Council continue to function at its present level?		

HOW DOES THE ADMINISTRATION PARTICIPATE IN THE COUNCIL?		
Do you think the administration is supportive of the Council?		
Is there a regular means by which administration keeps informed of Council meetings and activities?		
Does administration keep the Council informed of the Home's news and changes in policies and regulations?		
Does administration seek the Council's opinion on policies, procedures and other issues?		
Do you feel that administration hears the Council's concerns and recommendations and gives then serious consideration?		
HOW DOES YOUR COUNCIL BECOME CONSTRUCTIVELY INVOLVED?		
Is the Council involved in welcoming or orientation of new families or Residents?		
Is the Council informed about the duties, functions and responsibilities of the various departments of the Home?		
Does the Council provide opportunities for members to gain needed information on the Long-Term Care system?		
Has your Council been involved in sponsoring a special event or activity for families and/or residents?		

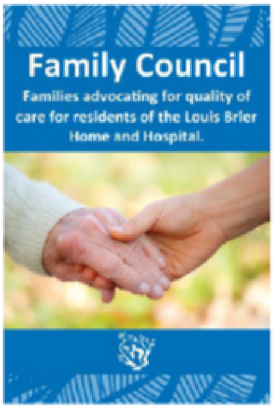
Sample Promotional Materials: "What is a Family Council" and Recruitment Posters

Family Council welcomes new members and volunteers!

Come and join us! We welcome you to attend our meetings to find out more. Our membership is free with lots of "rewards".

What is Family Council?

For both residents and their families, friends or other caregivers, moving to a care centre is a major transition, accompanied by a loss of what is familiar and comfortable, The Louis Brier Family Council is a group of people (families of residents, friends and caregivers) who collaborate with LBHH senior management team to continue to advance residents' quality of care from the family and resident perspective.



What are the benefits of being part of Louis Brier's Family Council?

We give families opportunities to:

- work together, support one another, share experiences and look for solutions to common concerns
- communicate concerns to LBHH, join committees, follow up on solutions, have a voice in decisions, and hear staff and administration's views
- advocate for approaches which improve resident quality of life and create a community of care
- increase member understanding and awareness of what's possible through guest presentations and knowledge sharing

What impact can the Family Council have?

These are successes our Family Council has had. We have:

- created ways to welcome and support new residents and their families
- developed strong relationships between residents, families, caregivers and the Senior LBHH Leadership Team
- helped families understand long-term care environments
- raised funds, through an annual campaign, for projects, items, and activities (an ongoing "wish list")





For more information, please email
lb.familycouncil@gmail.com

FAMILY COUNCIL

Supporting residents means supporting your loved one

JOIN US!

WAYS TO STAY INFORMED & PARTICIPATE

- Attend our monthly Family Council meetings
- Connect with Family Council: lb.familycouncil@gmail.com
- Volunteer an hour at our Family Council Information Desk
- Support our annual campaign coming soon: Fall/Winter 2021
- Attend our monthly Resident Advocacy Sub Committee (RASC) Meetings
- Connect with RASC: residentadvocacygroup@gmail.com
- Take a seat on the Companion Advisory Committee (CAC)
- Take part in one of the many Louis Brier Committees

(from Food Advisory Committee to Spiritual Committee)

- Be on the Executive Committee – this Fall 2021
- Volunteer on the Garden Committee

Enrich your life by enriching the lives of others.
Contact Family Council:
lb.familycouncil@gmail.com





PART 3: RESOURCES

Articles and Resources on Resident/Family Councils

- Ministry of Health: Families and Resident Councils
- Island Health: Resident/Family Council or Family Support Group Guide
- BCCPA: Exploring the potential benefits and constraints of family councils in long-term care
- Interior Health: Family Council Resource Guide

Resources from Other Jurisdictions

- Toolkit: Alberta Resident and Family Councils Act
- Family Councils Ontario

Support for Family Caregivers

First Link® Dementia Helpline (Operated by the Alzheimer Society of B.C.)

The First Link® Dementia Helpline is for anyone affected by dementia, whether professionally or personally. Helpline staff and volunteers give people the support they need, when they need it. The First Link® Dementia Helpline is available to provide information and support any time Monday to Friday, from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. in English and from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Cantonese and Mandarin or Punjabi.

Contact information:

English: 1-800-936-6033
Cantonese and Mandarin: 1-833-674-5007
Punjabi: 1-833-674-5003

Caregiver Support Line (Operated by Family Caregivers of British Columbia)

The Caregiver Support Line is available Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for family caregivers who are seeking support, information or assistance with health care navigation. Virtual support groups are also offered.

https://www.familycaregiversbc.ca/
Phone toll-free: 1-877-520-3267

Provincial Association of Family Councils

Independent Long-Term Care Councils Association of BC (ILTCCABC)
iltccabc@gmail.com

ILTCCABC's member Regional Associations of Family Councils

Fraser Association of Family Councils	FAFC2021alicea@gmail.com
Interior Association of Family Councils	interiorfamilycouncils@gmail.com
Northern Association of Family Councils	nafc@iltccabc.ca
Vancouver Coastal Association of Family Councils	vcafc.regional@gmail.com
Vancouver Island Association of Family Councils	VIAFC.regional@gmail.com

Other Resources

- Now What? Managing the Emotional Journey of Long Term Care, Deborah Bakti
- Recipe for Empathy: Six Strategies to Transform Your Families into Fans in Seniors Care, Deborah Bakti

About BCCPA & EngAge BC

Established in 1977, BC Care Providers Association (BCCPA) is the leading voice for B.C.'s continuing care sector. Our growing membership base includes over 450 long-term care, assisted living, and commercial members from across British Columbia. Through its operating arm EngAge BC, the organization represents independent living and private-pay home health operators.

BCCPA and EngAge BC members support more than 19,000 seniors annually in long-term care and assisted living settings and 6,500 independent living residents. Additionally, our members deliver almost 2.5 million hours of home care and home support services each year.

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- David Keselman, Chief Executive Officer, Lois Brier Home & Hospital
- Ann Marie Leijen, Chief Executive Officer, Maplewood House

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- Isobel Mackenzie, Seniors Advocate of B.C.
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- Kim Slater, Chair, Vancouver Island Association of Family Councils

Use of document

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BC Care Providers
ASSOCIATION