



Family Caregivers of British Columbia

Community-based Support Services

Community-based support services include a range of resources that assist people living at home with tasks of daily living and helps alleviate some of the demands placed on family caregivers. Below is a list of some of these services:

Volunteer organizations provide home visitors, walking companions, and volunteers to assist with odd jobs, gardening, reading, letter writing, and driving to appointments or shopping.

Meal programs

Some seniors' centers and residential facilities provide meals to seniors on a drop-in basis. Meals on Wheels and many catering companies will deliver meals to your home. These businesses may offer senior's discounts and cater to special diets.

Grocery delivery services

Volunteer-based services exist to assist seniors with grocery shopping. People can place grocery orders by phone or on-line. The grocery service selects the items and makes a home delivery. The delivery service often is free for grocery orders above a minimum amount. Check with your local grocery store.

Laundry services

In many communities, there are companies that will pick up laundry at your home, wash, dry, fold, and deliver it back to your home. These services vary in terms of cost.

House cleaning services are a very useful resource for family caregivers. Some house cleaning companies will provide additional services, including doing laundry, moving furniture, taking out garbage and doing garden work. The rates of these companies vary significantly, as does whether the service provides a discount to seniors.

Transportation services

There are a number of transportation services and benefits for seniors. BC Transit and BC Ferries offer discount fares for seniors. BC Transit also offers Taxi Saver coupons and HandiDart. HandiDart is a special door-to-door service for eligible people with disabilities and seniors who are unable to use regular public transit. Some local taxi companies have specially-equipped taxis available.

Equipment supplies and loan cupboards

A variety of aids and equipment are available on loan or for purchase to assist seniors or people with various communication, mobility and/or specific personal care needs.

These include medical equipment, incontinence supplies, mobility aids, vision aids and hospital beds.

Medical alert systems are 24-hours-a-day/seven-days-a-week monitoring services for frail elders and people with disabilities. The system typically hooks into a person's phone system. Installation costs vary from company to company, as do monthly monitoring fees.

Community bathing services are for people who cannot safely use the bathing facilities in their own home, even with the installation of devices such as grab bars and bath boards. The program offers attention to personal hygiene provided by a skilled nursing assistant. Services include a tub bath, hair care and care to fingernails and toenails.

Contact information for all these services is available through your regional health authority Home and Community Care Program, the yellow pages or local seniors' organizations. Or you can call the Family Caregivers' Network (250-384-0408) and we will help to connect you with the appropriate resources. In the CRD, Seniors Serving Seniors produces a free Seniors' Services Directory which is a comprehensive listing of community services available for seniors. (250-382-4331, www.seniorsservingseniors.bc.ca).

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