



# your caregiver journey

A tool for navigating the transition  
from home into a long-term care facility



This tool has been designed from the experiences of caregivers like yourself. It is intended to be a resource for you to add information and record details to help you in your caregiving journey. There are many factors to consider when helping your family member transition into a long-term care facility.

Making the decision to relocate a parent, spouse or relative from home into a care home can be one of the most difficult decisions caregivers have to make. This resource suggests three phases that can be common to this experience.

**phase one** recognizing changes & making the decision to move

**phase two** making the move

**phase three** providing ongoing support to your family member

my  
journey

Name:

Phone:

# phase one

Recognizing changes & making the decision to move

Future care planning decisions should be considered. Your family member's care needs can be complex and you may be finding it more challenging to keep them safe at home. This is a phase for gathering information, asking questions, and getting answers.



List some changes you've noticed in your family member over the past six months (e.g., cooking habits, appetite, weight loss, personal grooming).

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Have you noticed changes in your family member's health? (e.g., hearing, eyesight, mobility, etc.) Do they need an assessment?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



It is important to share your thoughts and concerns with your family member's doctor or specialist.

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

What do they think?

Where is the best place for your family member to be cared for? Inquire about home care or assisted living, before considering a long-term care facility for your family member. Consider the differences between these types of care. Write some of your thoughts here.

Have a conversation with your family member. What are some of their care wishes, hopes and priorities.

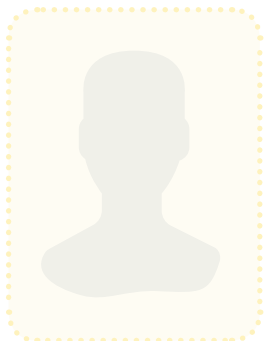
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Record the contact information for care providers you may want to talk to (e.g., physician, social worker, discharge planner, local health authority health services line, case manager, etc.)

Name	Contact	Organization/Specialty:

# getting to know me

On this sheet, record important information about your family member. This can be shared with your health care team.



## About Me

Name	
Hometown	
Languages I speak	
Places I worked	
No. of kids/grandkids	

## In a typical day, I like to...

## My favourite things include...

Foods	
Colours	
Music/Songs	
Hobbies	

## My least favourite things include...

Foods	
Colours	
Music/Songs	
Hobbies	

## Other things I want you to know about me...

# phase one caregiver check-in

Self-care is important at all phases of this journey

It is so important to look after yourself in order to be helpful to your family member.

How are feeling at this phase of the journey?

What are you doing to look after yourself?

What kinds of help do you need from others?

Set a few goals for yourself:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

# Phase Two

Making the move

If a long-term care facility has been chosen as the best option, you will need to shift your attention towards preparing for the move.



Consider your role in picking a long-term care facility. List some criteria you consider important (e.g., location, proximity to family members, quality of the food, belongings they can bring, etc.)

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Do you know someone who can help with the legal and financial aspects of the move? Take note of them here.

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Find out how long you have to accept the first bed that becomes available at different long-term care facilities. Some facilities may have different timelines.

Facility	Acceptance Deadline

Make note of what needs to be in place before arriving at the facility with your family member? (e.g., furniture, personal items, etc.)

Find out who is responsible for transporting your family member to the facility. Will there be a cost?

Driver: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Ask the facility for guidance about move-in day and your role in this process.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**This can be a very challenging time, especially if your family member does not wish to go into the chosen long-term care facility. Be patient and kind with one another. Seek as much help and guidance as you can.**





# phase two caregiver check-in

Self-care is important at all phases of this journey

With all that is going on, take a moment to think about how you are doing. It is still important to look after yourself in order to continue to care for your family member.

Describe how you're feeling at this phase of the journey.

What are you doing to look after yourself?

What kinds of help do you need from others?

Are there any goals you can set for the next phase of the journey?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

# Phase Three

Providing ongoing support to your family member

Once your family member has relocated, your first couple of visits may be hard. As your family member starts to settle in, things should get easier.



As part of your caregiver journey, it is helpful to have a strong, positive relationship with the facility staff. Who are your main points of contact? Write them here.

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Aim to provide the care facility with a social history of your family member. Set-up a meeting and provide them with a photocopy of your **Getting to Know Me** sheet (Page 4 & 5) and any other details you wish to share.

Ask the facility staff the following questions:

Who should I speak with about facility rules and procedures? (e.g., guidelines for meals, social activities, safety, bathing)

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

What personal care, or other tasks are my responsibility now?

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What can you do to make the care facility more home-like for your family member? (e.g., lamps, pieces of art, furniture, plants, etc.)

Ask if there is a family council or a family support group that you can join at the facility. This may help with information and communication exchanges, as well as provide an opportunity to share experiences.

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

If the facility isn't a good fit, what other options may be considered?

Talk to your family member about their future wishes. Look into substitute decision-making, power of attorney, advanced care planning, and preparation for end of life. Use the space below to record the highlights from these conversations.

# your caregiver journey

## Resources

Name	Contact	Organization/Specialty:
bc211	Dial 211	information & referral service
Health link BC	Dial 811	health questions & advice
Better at Home	1 (604) 268-1312 betterathome.ca	information & referral service

## Other Resources

Name	Contact	Organization/Specialty:

## Notes

## The Tool

The caregiver tool emerged from a collaborative research project between researchers at the University of Victoria and the Fraser Health region, in British Columbia (BC). This tool is based on experiences and insights from family caregivers' who have helped family members move from home into a long-term care facility. The researchers then reconnected with the original caregivers and with family support networks across BC to ask about the value of this tool for helping families during this time.

This final tool represents a combination of all of the collected feedback we received. We hope you find this information helpful and informative.

## Project Details

The primary research team was Taylor Hainstock, MA, and Denise Cloutier, PhD. Both researchers are affiliates with the Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health at the University of Victoria.

Please contact Denise at [dcloutier@uvic.ca](mailto:dcloutier@uvic.ca) for more information about this study, or your local health authority for additional information and resources to help you with this journey. This research was supported by an Internal Research/Creative Projects Grant.



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The graphic design for this Caregiver Tool was done by Nadia Beyzaei in conjunction with the Health Design Lab at Emily Carr University of Art + Design.

