

Toolkit for service providers

Long-term care homes
Resident and Family Councils

Fall 2024



Introduction

This toolkit is designed to help you raise awareness and promote participation in your local Resident and Family Councils. You will find resources and guidance to effectively engage residents, family and caregivers to get involved.

Each resident living in a long-term care home and their family and caregivers who sometimes speak on behalf of residents are welcome to join a council or form a council where one does not exist. Councils can help inform how to improve the residents' experience and make sure all voices are heard.

In this document, you will find:

- Page 3: Leader Information Sheet (internal, regional)
- Page 4: Resources (regional)
- Page 5-6: Handout (regional)
- Page 7: Copy (template, local), care home newsletter
- Page 8: Poster

Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) is committed to delivering exceptional care to 1.25 million people, including the First Nations, Métis and Inuit, within the traditional territories of the Heiltsuk, Kitasoo-Xai'xais, Lil'wat, x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), N'Quatqua, Nuxalk, Samahquam, shíshálh, Skatin, Squamish, Tla'amin, Tsleil-Waututh, Wuikinuxv, and Xa'xtsa.

Leader information sheet (regional)

Talk to your teams about

Resident and Family Councils at long-term care homes

Updated: October 2024

What you need to know

- At long-term care homes throughout VCH, we work in collaboration with residents, family and caregivers to enhance residents' quality of life, fostering a sense of support and connection for all.
- Through Resident and Family Councils, we can amplify the voices of people living in long-term care.
- Council members can include residents and family and caregivers who sometimes speak on behalf of residents.
- Councils meet regularly to talk about things that matter to residents.
- In British Columbia, there are local, regional and provincial levels of Resident and Family Councils.
- Care home operators are required to follow council engagement regulations and policies as outlined in the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act Residential Care Regulations 59 -59.2* (Home and Community Care Policy Manual Chapter 6 H).

What you can do

- Talk to residents, family and caregivers about what the local councils are, why they are important and how care home leadership can support Resident and Family Councils.
- Encourage residents, family and caregivers to participate in council meetings and events.
- Meet with councils, at least twice a year, to provide an opportunity for council members to raise concerns, ask questions and make recommendations.
- Provide administrative and logistical support to strengthen independent councils that determine service provider involvement.
- Share questions and feedback with the VCH Regional Long-term Care Program via email at LTCEOC@vch.ca.

What you can say

- Long-term care homes are not just for care; they're the residents' homes.
- It's important for you, your family and caregivers to make choices about your daily life.
- Resident and Family Councils help share your voice—at the care home, regionally and provincially.
- Through the councils, you, family and caregivers meet regularly to share experiences, support each other, decide things together, suggest improvements and nurture a community.
- We want everyone here to feel supported and connected.
- Councils are supported by our leadership team at the care home, and additional support is available from the Vancouver Coastal Association of Family Councils, an independent non-profit that offers information, resources and support to start up and sustain effective local councils.
- Talk to us any time if you are interested in joining or to learn more about the council at our care home.

Resources

Policies and Regulations

- [Community Care and Assisted Living Act](#)
- [Home and Community Care Policy Manual](#)
- [Ministry of Health Resident and Family Councils](#)
- [Residential Care Regulation](#)

Guides and supports

- [Developing, Supporting and Maintaining Resident and Family Councils \(MOH\)](#)
- [Independent Long-term Care Councils Association of BC](#)
- [Supporting an Active Partnership: A Service Provider's Guide to Family and Resident Councils](#)
- [UBC School of Nursing "Raise Your Voice" video](#)
- [Vancouver Coastal Association of Family Councils](#)
- [Vancouver Coastal Health Resident and Family Councils](#)

Share your voice. Shape your home.

Join a long-term care Resident and Family Council



Your voice matters

Resident and Family Councils amplify the voices of people living in long-term care.

Council members are residents and family and caregivers who sometimes speak on behalf of residents. They meet regularly, help make decisions together, suggest quality of life improvements and build a sense of community.

Councils promote a supportive and collaborative forum for members to discuss issues and develop plans that provide a respectful, caring environment for residents and their families.

Council members work together to:

- Create ways to welcome and support new residents, family and caregivers.
- Help new families understand policies and practices, how to raise concerns and who to contact with questions.
- Plan and support special events (such as musical groups, dinners, seasonal activities and outings to parks or restaurants).
- Advocate for improvements, such as enhancements, to common areas at the home.

Join a council

Reach out to the leadership team at your care home if you are interested in joining or learning more about your local council.

Support for councils

The Vancouver Coastal Association of Family Councils is an independent non-profit that offers information, resources, and support to start up and sustain effective local councils. Learn more at VancouverCoastalFamilyCouncils.ca.

We care for everyone.

At long-term care homes across our region, we strive for residents, family and caregivers to collaboratively make choices to enhance their quality of life, fostering a sense of support and connection for all.



Your participation has reach

In British Columbia, there are three levels of Resident and Family Councils:



Local Long-term Care Home Resident and Family Councils

At each care home, residents, family and caregivers meet regularly to talk about how to make life better for residents in the care home. The council can be made up of residents and family and caregivers who sometimes speak on behalf of residents.



Regional Resident and Family Council Network

Representatives from local councils and Vancouver Coastal Health talk about what is going well and what can improve in care homes in the region. Vancouver Coastal Health hosts the network meetings four times per year.



Provincial Resident and Family Council Forum

Representatives from each regional network come together to discuss best practices, systemic issues and quality of life for residents. The Ministry of Health hosts the forum two times per year.

Copy (template), care home newsletter

Subject: Share your voice and shape your long-term care home with Resident and Family Councils

At [insert care home name], we believe in empowering residents and caregivers to be partners in their care. Through our local Resident and Family Councils, residents, family and caregivers can actively share ideas and influence decisions that impact residents' experience.

Our local council brings together residents, family and caregivers to amplify their voices in long-term care. They discuss what truly matters, support each other and make meaningful decisions to enhance our community. In British Columbia, our councils reach local, regional and provincial levels, ensuring your concerns are heard.

For more information and to get involved in the local council, contact our care home leadership at [insert local contact info].

[Learn more](#) about Resident and Family Councils in long-term care homes across the Vancouver Coastal Health region.

Subject: Resources for Resident and Family Councils

The following resources will help you establish and foster active participation in a Resident and Family Council.

Policies and Regulations

- [Community Care and Assisted Living Act](#)
- [Home and Community Care Policy Manual](#)
- [Ministry of Health Resident and Family Councils](#)
- [Residential Care Regulation](#)

Guide and supports

- [Developing, Supporting and Maintaining Resident and Family Councils \(MOH\)](#)
- [Independent Long-term Care Councils Association of BC](#)
- [Supporting an Active Partnership: Service Provider Guide to Family and Resident Councils](#)
- [UBC School of Nursing "Raise Your Voice" video](#)
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