

During the COVID-19 pandemic, should I or my family member go to live with family or stay in the long-term care home?

It can be hard to decide whether to take a loved one home during the pandemic. Working through the steps in this document can help prepare you and your loved ones to better discuss your options with your family member's care providers.

Step 1: Why are you, or your family member thinking of leaving the current care home?

Why?

For how long?

Step 2: What care is required and who can provide it in the family home?

It's important that you understand what care needs to be provided in the family home. Please speak to a nurse leader or doctor at the care home to get details about the care such as:

- monitoring personal safety and well-being 24 hours a day,
- personal care needs (e.g. moving/transferring, toileting/ incontinence care, eating/drinking, hygiene, oral care, dressing, grooming),
- medicines, treatments, dietary needs, social needs and other medical, nursing care needs

When you have the details, list each care item and think about the steps to ensure that this care can safely be provided in the family home. Beside each care item, identify **who** has the skills to provide the care, **how many people** are needed (e.g. 2 people to transfer to chair), and **how often** it is provided during a 24-hour day. Can it be provided until it's time to return to the long-term care home? Do you need outside home care workers (e.g., privately hired or VCH-funded through your local Community Health Centre)? Are they available?

Step 3: Is the family home safe and can the required care be provided there?

Check yes, no, or n/a (does not apply)

Can the required care that your doctor/nurse identified be given until re-admission?

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Can someone be home 24 hours a day to check for safety and well-being? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Can the daily help that is needed with personal support be provided (e.g. moving/transferring, toileting/ incontinence care, eating/drinking, hygiene, oral care, dressing, grooming)? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Can medications be provided at the right dose and time each day? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Can other needed care that your doctor/NP identified be provided? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Can you get access to a doctor or NP if your family member's medical needs change? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Can you or your family access either government-funded or private care workers to fill in any potential gaps? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | |

Are there other safety features in the family's home?

- Is there a call button or room monitor to call for help? Yes No N/A
- Are there grab bars for the bath, shower, toilet for safe bathing and toileting? Yes No N/A
- Is the toilet easy to use (e.g., raised toilet seat, arms, and/or commode)? Yes No N/A
- Is there space wide enough to rotate a walker or wheelchair in the bathroom and bedroom? Yes No N/A
- Is it easy and safe to get into the family home (e.g., no steps, or a ramp)? Yes No N/A
- Is it easy and safe to move within the family's home (e.g., no stairs or steps from living area to bedroom)? Yes No N/A
- Is the bed easy to get in and out of bed (e.g., partial side rail, hospital bed that can be lowered and raised to prevent back injuries when people help with personal care)? (e.g. hospital beds may be available to rent) Yes No N/A
- Can access to the stairs be blocked off to prevent a fall if you/your family member is confused and/or wanders? Yes No N/A

Step 4: Do you know the new rules for discharge and re-admission due to the pandemic?

To support families wanting to care for their loved ones in their own home during COVID-19, the BC Ministry of Health is making temporary change to policy for absences from long-term care homes. Before deciding to leave, it's important that you understand some facts about BC Ministry of Health's policy.

Facts about discharge. Please talk to the long-term care home nurse leader or your Care Home Consultant about the formal steps for discharge. Keep in mind that you/your substitute decision maker:

- should take all reasonable steps to ensure that all needed care is given after discharge
- are fully responsible for you/your family member's care, safety and well-being after discharge
- will require a community GP/NP to follow and provide medication support after discharge
- be aware that current demand on the health system, home and community care services may not be available for residents once they depart from long-term care, and if available there may be a cost associated with them in alignment with the client rate policy.

Facts about re-admission. During the COVID-19 pandemic, residents will **NOT** be able to return if:

- the care home is under outbreak protocol and closed to admissions;
- the resident has been exposed to and/or has symptoms of COVID-19.

I understand that should any of these circumstances arise, I/my family member may be required to wait for an undetermined and possibly lengthy period for readmission into LTC, and that readmission may not be to the home that I/my family member lived in previously.

Step 5: What else do you need to do before you bring your family member home?

Check the things you need to do before you make this choice.

- I need to discuss the options with _____
- I need to learn more about my options _____
- Other. Please specify _____

Adapted from: https://decisionaid.ohri.ca/docs/das/COV_ID- MoveFromLongTermCare.pdf

