

This is a guide for a conversation with an SDM or family in LTC in advance of COVID19 to inform them that based on our current understanding of COVID-19, it will most likely be recommended that care for their loved one take place in the home rather than transfer to acute care.

1. Introduction, ask how the SDM is coping in this stressful time of COVID19?

2. “I’d like to talk with you about what is ahead with your [relative’s] care now that COVID19 is spreading and in case [he/she] becomes infected is this okay?”

3. “What is your understanding about how COVID19 is affecting the elderly?”

4. “I want to share with you what we know now about how COVID19 effects seniors and those with _____ [specific health issues, eg Diabetes, Cardiovascular disease] like your [...].”

- “COVID - 19 is a viral illness that spreads like the flu. We know it is particularly serious in seniors, especially for those who have other medical conditions, like your [...]. If [...] does get sick from with this virus, I’m sorry to tell you that we know now there is a chance that [she/he] will die from it, possibly quite quickly.”
- “While each person’s situation is different, the safest and most comfortable place for most seniors to be cared for is in the care home. Doctors have learned that there is no benefit for most seniors with COVID-19 to go to the hospital and that they do not survive intensive care when they get that sick. And so far there is no treatment that can kill this virus. Your [...] might recover with supportive care here at the care home, or they may die from this illness.

5. “I am sorry to have to tell you this. Do you have any questions for me at this point?”

6. Reassurance, what we will be doing:

“We are preparing to care for any of our residents who become sick with COVID-19 in our care home. We want you to know that our main priority is to ensure that your [relative] is comfortable and cared for throughout their illness if they become sick. Most symptoms are related to cough, fever and shortness of breath. There are medicines and treatments for all of these symptoms that will be provided in the home and they will be provided with all fluids and nourishment for their comfort.”

7. Optional re what the resident might be saying right now)

“If [...] could express [...] wishes, what would he/she say was most important to them right now? What is most important to you?”

8. Closing –

- Additional reassurance or understanding that this is a scary time for everyone right now and that we will be providing the resident with the very best care possible.
- “Do you have any other questions for me right now?”