

handbook
for **Home Sharing Providers**



COMMUNITY LIVING
BRITISH COLUMBIA

handbook

for

Home Sharing Providers



Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) has prepared this handbook for home sharing providers who support adults with a developmental disability. The handbook includes information that will be of use to those who provide support directly on behalf of CLBC and those who contract with a service provider agency.

The purpose of this handbook is to ensure that home sharing providers clearly understand their roles and responsibilities. The handbook reviews important standards and policies that have been endorsed by CLBC. It also provides an overview of successful practices within the field and shares resources that promote the longevity of home sharing relationships.

You will learn about:

- CLBC and our home sharing network
- rewards and potential challenges of life as a home sharing provider
- contractual expectations
- successful practices guidelines
- standards for home sharing
- important policies
- monitoring practices
- creating good lives in welcoming communities
- resources

The Handbook for Home Sharing Providers is the product of a collaborative endeavour that reflects feedback from individuals, families, home sharing providers, service provider agencies, CLBC personnel, and other interest groups. We would specifically like to acknowledge the input of the following contributors:

- Andrea Baker (CLBC)
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If you have questions or concerns about the material presented in this handbook, please contact your local CLBC quality service office. Contact information for each office can be found on our website at www.communitylivingbc.ca or by calling our head office at 1-604-664-0101 or toll-free at 1-877-660-2522.

We hope you enjoy this handbook and find it useful in your role as a home sharing provider. Thank you for your continued efforts on behalf of the individuals and families we support.



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- Industry Canada Community Access Program
- Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee (OPGT)
- Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network (PLAN)
- Representation Agreement Resource Centre (RARC)





CLBC's Home Sharing Network

Home sharing describes a situation in which an adult with a developmental disability shares a home with someone who provides ongoing support. Support may include a furnished room and other space in the home, assistance with self-care and relationship building, life skills, meal preparation, personal care, and use of community resources and generic services. Beyond this very technical definition, it must be acknowledged that home sharing is not a job. It's a chosen lifestyle!

Home sharing is a very broad and flexible label that includes a wide variety of arrangements. In some situations, home sharing involves very close relationships. The individuals within the home share not only their physical space, but also their lives. The members of the home spend a lot of time together and are actively involved in one another's daily activities. In other situations, the home sharing arrangement is characterized by more independent relationships. The members of the home generally go their own ways and come together at specific times or for specific purposes.

However, despite the endless variations, there are some commonalities within all of these arrangements. Those who are contracted to provide home sharing support have the following responsibilities:

- treat the individual with respect and dignity at all times
- fully integrate and treat the individual as an equal participant in the home and community
- ensure the individual's safety and general well-being
- provide support and guidance
- offer nutritious meals that respect cultural backgrounds and dietary needs
- provide positive adult role modeling
- create an atmosphere that fosters independence and personal growth while ensuring the individual remains safe
- ensure the individual is provided with appropriate medical and dental care and follow routines prescribed by health professionals
- nurture positive relationships between the individual and members of his/her family and support network
- encourage and support the individual to connect with community and to access generic services

CLBC and its predecessors have been delivering home sharing services to adults with a developmental disability since the 1970s. Home sharing can be delivered under direct contract with CLBC or under arrangement with service providers in unlicensed and licensed homes.

Since 1991, the number of individuals using this type of support has increased by 387 per cent and continues to show steady growth (13 per cent since 2002). It is the fastest-growing residential option in BC. There are now home sharing providers in virtually every community of BC. As of April 2007, there are approximately 2,500 adults in home sharing arrangements. This is equal to the number of individuals who live in staffed residential resources. As a home sharing provider, you are an important part of a huge network. As part of this network, it is important for you to understand CLBC's vision, mission and values, and to ensure these are mirrored in the service you provide.

INTRODUCTION TO CLBC

CLBC is a Crown agency that delivers support and services to people with developmental disabilities, children with special needs, and their families. We have a board of directors that includes self-advocates, family members, and representatives from the community. We have staff located in community offices throughout BC. We support more than 10,400 adults and 8,900 children in a variety of residential, community inclusion, and other services.

We believe that people with developmental disabilities and their families know best when it comes to their needs, goals, and planning for the future. CLBC helps individuals and families achieve their goals and live the lives they want. We help create support plans, make sure health and safety standards are maintained when individuals live away from their families, help people connect to their community, and put paid supports in place as required.

CLBC's role is to help people with developmental disabilities live and work in their communities. Resources that are available in the community must be used as much as possible before requesting funding for services. This includes help from family and friends as well as services that are available to all citizens (e.g., public transportation, community recreation centres, or health care).

VISION

CLBC's vision is one of full citizenship in which people with developmental disabilities lead good lives, have rich relationships with friends and family, financial security, choices in how they live their lives, employment opportunities and are accepted and valued as citizens. This is best described as people leading **good lives in welcoming communities**. As a steward of this vision, CLBC is committed to fostering the growth of inclusive, supportive communities.

MISSION

CLBC responds to the life-long needs and goals of individuals and families by recognizing their abilities and contributions, sharing leadership with communities, and funding supports that honour individual choice.

VALUES

CLBC understands individuals with developmental disabilities and their families have hopes and dreams like everyone else and that they are in the best position to understand what their needs are and how they should be met. As an agency committed to helping those it serves to achieve their dreams, CLBC upholds the following values:

- respecting the rights of all people
- supporting people to make their own decisions
- supporting people to achieve their dreams for the future
- respecting the important role of family and friends in people's lives
- promoting people's ability for life-long learning, development, and contribution
- being open, honest and fair in all aspects of our work
- working cooperatively with others
- promoting a culture of responsibility, respect, and trust
- supporting our employees to do their best
- inspiring creativity and innovation
- striving for quality in everything we do
- being accountable to the people we serve

COMMUNITY COUNCILS

CLBC has established community councils in each of the 17 community living centre areas across the province. All councils include nominated self-advocates, family members, service providers, and community members who represent the local culture.

The councils ensure that communities have meaningful involvement in how their services are delivered and how outcomes are achieved for individuals with developmental disabilities, children with special needs and their families. These bodies identify new service approaches, help set local budget priorities, encourage community development, and provide feedback on how CLBC and service providers at the community level are responding to the needs of individuals and families. The councils work with CLBC managers to identify gaps, overlaps, issues, and service-delivery challenges within the area.

Each community council acts as an ambassador, strives to create inclusive communities, and participates in shared decision making. Together with CLBC staff and managers, they enhance the creation of safe environments, improve access to community resources, and acknowledge the gifts and contributions of people with developmental disabilities. In addition, they help develop and promote creative solutions that improve access and inclusion.

Key CLBC Staff

CLBC has a community planning division and a quality service division. Community living centres and quality service offices are located throughout the province and are staffed respectively by facilitators and quality service analysts who have specific roles and responsibilities. Contact information for the various offices can be found on the CLBC website in the Your Community section.

As a home sharing provider, most of your contact will be with the quality service office. However, it is important to understand each role.

FACILITATOR

- assists individuals and families to determine whether they are eligible for CLBC-funded services and explains what is required to confirm eligibility
- facilitates the development and implementation of *Individual Support Plans*
- provides planning support to individuals who wish to access new services or substantially change their current arrangements
- facilitates access to community services, resources, and activities

QUALITY SERVICE ANALYST

- collects all information necessary to review an *Individual Support Plan*
- determines if the request for CLBC-funded supports in the plan is assigned priority and immediately funded or waitlisted
- liaises with CLBC contractors to ensure that individuals are receiving quality services
- responds to requests and inquiries from contractors (including home sharing providers)
- monitors/adjusts services to achieve goals in individual plans
- monitors at-risk adults who are supported by service providers



Keeping in the Loop

Like all responsive organizations, CLBC changes as needs are identified. It is important for you to be informed.

WEBSITE

CLBC maintains a very thorough and up-to-date website that includes everything from service overviews to training opportunities, relevant policies, highlights of important issues, and contact information for CLBC head office and regional offices. The site meets recognized standards for accessibility. It allows the user to choose the size of the words, change the background and text colours to make it easier to read, and includes content that is written in plain language.

Visit the website at:

www.communitylivingbc.ca.

NEWSLETTER

The Citizen is published every two months by CLBC's communications department. It is an excellent source of information for news that is relevant to the individuals and families supported by CLBC and to the general community. This newsletter is available in electronic or print format, free of charge, to anyone.

To receive *The Citizen*, please visit the CLBC website and sign up in the Contact section, under Who We Are.

NETWORKING

Home sharing providers are encouraged to connect with and support one another. The role of the home sharing provider is potentially isolating. It is invaluable to share information and support with others who are in a similar role. There are many benefits to networking with other providers. These include:

- mentoring opportunities
- ongoing support
- information sharing
- forming relationships with others in similar roles

Home sharing providers might be interested to learn about EnVision Society for Choice and Inclusion. EnVision is a non-profit organization that provides leadership and guidance for independent home sharing contractors. It is the only provincial organization for contractors providing home sharing services. Further information about EnVision and how to contact the organization can be found in the **RESOURCES** section of this handbook.



Home Sharing that Lasts

While sharing your home with an individual with a developmental disability can be an extremely rewarding experience, it is important to be aware that it will not be entirely without its challenges. If you have ever been married, raised children, lived with a roommate, or had houseguests, you know this is true whether the individual you are sharing your home with has a developmental disability or not.

You will not always see eye-to-eye and may even frustrate one another from time to time. However, there are things you can do to make the relationship last and to ensure that the home is a happy place for everyone.

The strategies presented in this section are intended to help you create a home sharing relationship that will last.

PEOPLE GET READY

Home sharing is not for everyone. When searching for home sharing providers, CLBC looks for individuals who are able to provide a positive environment and those who have the skills required to support an individual with a developmental disability. It helps if you are resourceful, generous, healthy, and flexible. It is also important for you to have good coping skills and the ability to effectively address issues that arise in your own life.

BASIC REQUIREMENTS

The following are the basic requirements for home sharing providers who contract with CLBC:

- minimum of 19 years of age
- First Aid training
- CPR training
- satisfactory home study
- satisfactory background check
- three letters of reference
- training and/or previous experience in community living or a related field
- physician's certification of good health
- signed declaration of confidentiality
- signed release of information
- valid driver's licence

In addition to the above, home sharing providers are encouraged to seek out information and training regarding the specific disability-related needs of the individual they are supporting.

PROVIDING POSITIVE SUPPORT

CLBC also looks for home sharing providers who understand and support its vision, mission, and values. Within this context, home sharing providers are expected to do the following:

- focus on abilities and maximize independence
- provide effective support — do things with the person and not just for the person
- promote the dignity of choice, while recognizing the individual's right to take risks, providing information relating to the risk, and developing strategies to minimize risks

STRANGERS IN OUR MIDST

To ensure that everyone gets off to a good start, it is important that you know a little bit about one another. As a home sharing provider, you are entitled to all relevant background information about the individual who will potentially share your home. The CLBC representative who facilitates your orientation will provide information to enable the best possible success for the individual you will be supporting in your home.

Below is a list of questions you could ask if you require further information:

- Why has the individual chosen to live in a home sharing arrangement?
- What is the individual's family situation?
- Does the individual sleep through the night?
- Are there religious, cultural, or ethnic considerations?
- Does the individual have a job or have regular daytime activities?
- What will help the individual feel most at home?

While you will undoubtedly uncover new pieces of information and have even more questions as you get to know one another, this information should help prepare you to support the individual during the transition to a new home.

AN INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING HOME

Your home should be welcoming and must provide the individual with the opportunity for inclusion. It is important that the individual experience the home as his or her own. As a home sharing provider, it is up to you to create a comfortable environment and to support the individual to feel at ease. Little things, such as encouraging the individual to answer the phone or make contributions to the home's décor can really go a long way to making everyone experience a sense of belonging.

When sharing your home with another person, it is important to be aware of your own boundaries and to be prepared to discuss these with the individual. There may be certain areas of the home that each person reserves for private use while other areas are designated as communal. As much as possible, these wishes should be respected. As outlined in your home sharing contract, each individual must have a private bedroom. Beyond this, it is a process of finding what works best for the individual and those who live in the home.

The individual should have the choice to participate in the activities of the home environment in a manner that is comfortable. Some individuals like to be very involved and interact regularly with those in the home. Others prefer their independence and interact only at specific times or for specific purposes. As a home sharing provider, you must always be sensitive to, and supportive of the individual's ongoing need for inclusion.

WE ARE NOT ALONE

CLBC's vision highlights the importance of rich relationships with friends and family. As a home sharing provider, you are expected to support the individual to maintain existing relationships and to establish new connections that promote quality of life. The individual with whom you share a home may have numerous friends, family members, acquaintances, and advocates or may be quite isolated. Either scenario presents unique challenges.

SUPPORTING THE INVOLVEMENT OF FAMILY

CLBC supports the families of individuals who access our services. It is our expectation that every home sharing provider reflect this principle in the support they offer.

Families are recognized as the most valuable members of the individual's support team because they provide the person with love and devotion that cannot be found anywhere else. Family involvement can enhance the individual's:

- well-being and happiness
- quality of life
- safety and security
- inclusion within the community

Families are also an extremely important resource for home sharing providers. The wealth of information they can provide about their family member enables you to better plan for and meet the needs of the individual you support.

Establish a policy of open, positive communication and a spirit of inclusion. Whenever possible, include the family in social events, planning meetings, and other important occasions in the individual's life. Part of your responsibility as a home sharing provider is to nurture the relationships between the individual you support and the person's family and friends.

BUILDING POSITIVE CONNECTIONS

As a home sharing provider, it is important for you to facilitate and nurture opportunities for community involvement — this includes opportunities for helping others in the community and supporting individuals to share their gifts, talents, and abilities. Part of your role is to ensure that those you support have people in their lives who care for them and who enrich their lives. Relationships add meaning, richness, and depth to our lives and to the lives of the people we support.

In addition to enriching our lives, relationships can help keep us safe. One of the ways we can decrease the vulnerability of the people we support is to ensure that people in the community know them — to ensure that there is someone who will miss them if they don't turn up at their regular haunts. Through strong community connections, the true potential of inclusion becomes apparent. Other community members greet the individual, notice if the person is having difficulties, and provide assistance.

For more information about the benefits of connection to community, refer to *Responding to Vulnerability: a Discussion Paper about Safeguards and People with Developmental Disabilities* that was published by CLBC in April 2007. This can be found on our website in the Publications section.

CREATING BALANCE

The role of the home sharing provider is a demanding one. It brings many joys and rewards, but it also brings additional stresses to your household. It will undoubtedly change your everyday routines and experiences. We expect that you will create an environment that allows the individual to have a healthy, balanced life. To achieve this goal, you must take care of you and your family's needs as well as the needs of the individual you serve and support.

TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

When you are sharing a home with a person with a developmental disability, taking care of yourself is not a luxury, but an absolute necessity. You have a responsibility to the person you support to make sure that you are always in peak form. Some of the ways in which you might do this include:

- knowing your own limits and those of your family
- utilizing the supports that are offered to you
- making use of your informal support network (i.e., family and friends)
- linking with other home sharing providers to share information and support
- knowing what you and your family require to minimize stress
- being aware of what you need to remain emotionally healthy
- sharing achievements, successes, satisfactions, and responsibilities with the other members of your family
- working co-operatively with the other members of the individual's support team including the CLBC facilitator and service quality analyst, the individual supported, his/her family, and other involved professionals

TAKE A BREAK

Even if things are going well, it is important for you to take regular breaks. This will ensure that you are getting your own needs met and that you have the energy (and desire) to support the person with whom you are sharing a home.

Informal supports can be very helpful. Your own friends, neighbours, and family members can be called upon to share some of the responsibility that you normally carry. They can often take on little assignments that allow you to feel just a bit less overwhelmed. In many cases, you can also look to the individual's network for support. Maintaining open channels of communication with the individual's friends, family members, volunteers, and staff can make a real difference.

Most home sharing contracts include funds to purchase supports so that you are able to take a break. You can use this funding in the manner that best suits your unique circumstances. Some people reserve a couple of hours every week so they can take a break. Others save it all up so that they can take a more extended break (perhaps for a vacation). Many reserve just a little bit of funding to deal with unanticipated emergencies, illnesses, or family crises.

Respite refers to supports purchased by the home sharing provider for services outside the home. **Relief** refers to temporary support services purchased by the home sharing provider for supports that take place within the home

Recruiting Respite Providers

It can be challenging to find the right person to provide respite. Look first to your own network and to that of the individual. Pay attention. Keep track of the people with whom the individual seems to have a natural, healthy connection. As much as possible, involve the individual in recruiting respite providers. If you are really stuck and can't seem to locate an appropriate respite provider, contact your local CLBC quality service office. The analysts at that office may have some ideas or may be able to refer you to an agency in your community with qualified providers. Networks such as EnVision may also be able to help. If at all possible, provide time for the potential respite/relief provider and individual to get to know one another. You can use this time to provide important training and to make sure that everyone is comfortable with the arrangement.

Anyone contracted to support the individual must be properly screened. As a home sharing provider, it is your job to ensure that respite providers and other assistants are able to meet the needs of the individual. Minimally, you must complete the following checks:

- minimum of 19 years of age
- criminal record check
- background check (i.e., references)

Respite and relief providers must have appropriate training and experience. They must be thoroughly oriented to the needs of the individual.

For respite services outside your home, it is vital that you visit the potential respite provider's home to ensure that the environment is safe and appropriate. Use the *Health and Safety Checklist for Home Sharing* when conducting a home study before making any decisions or commitments as to the appropriateness of the respite services being considered. (A sample of questions for a home study service can be obtained from your local CLBC quality service office.)

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Home sharing providers who contract with CLBC have the right to:

- be treated with consideration, trust, honesty, respect, acceptance, and fairness by CLBC and its representatives
- receive all pertinent information about the individual supported including medical, educational, personal care information, and significant family history
- consult with members of the person's support network, involved professionals, and CLBC representatives to effectively meet the individual's needs
- receive services to support and stabilize the home and/or individual in times of crisis
- access training provided by CLBC for home sharing providers
- be provided with an explanation when a contract is terminated





Understanding Your Contract

CLBC standards, contract outcomes, and policies all work together to ensure quality service for individuals who live in home sharing arrangements.

Although home sharing often feels more like a way of life than a job, it is important to remember that it is a business arrangement. As a self-employed contractor, you are under contract to provide a specific service and are expected to conduct yourself professionally. This means understanding your contract and keeping certain records.

In addition to the guidelines provided by CLBC, you should be aware of regulations set out by other parties such as the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance (MEIA), Canada Revenue Agency, Worksafe BC, and ICBC.

Although we have included some useful information in this handbook, we encourage home sharing providers with specific questions or concerns to contact the appropriate resource. The following link is especially useful for home sharing providers in that it discusses the application of paragraph 81(1)h) of the *Income Tax Act* that relates to relevant income tax exemptions:

Canada Revenue Agency:

www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pub/tp/itnews-31r2/itnews-31r2-e.pdf

SIGNING ON THE DOTTED LINE

The *Client Services Agreement* is the actual contract for home sharing and describes the overall rules to which you are agreeing.

The *Component Services Schedule* includes the specific actions you agree to undertake for the person you support. It also includes the six general outcomes CLBC expects that you attain for that person. The following are the outcomes that relate to all home sharing contracts for adults:

- individuals are safe, secure, and receive good health care
- individuals and their families experience full citizenship through inclusion in their communities
- individuals and families take a lead role in the planning of supports and services that meet the unique needs of each individual
- individuals and families make key decisions about the services and supports they receive
- individuals and families have easy access to appropriate and timely supports and services that meet their needs
- the needs of individuals and families are responded to and met through flexible, innovative, and creative supports and services

PWD BENEFITS

Most individuals who live in home sharing arrangements meet Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance (MEIA) criteria for Person with a Disability (PWD) and are eligible for monthly benefits from the provincial government.

The current rate for full benefits is \$906.13 per month (as of April, 2007). The PWD payment includes a user fee of \$716.13 that the individual pays to the home sharing provider for this support. The remaining \$190 is retained by the individual for personal expenses.

A standard user fee is collected from each individual supported if the individual is in receipt of full PWD allocation, Old Age Security (OAS) or Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), employment earnings above the MEIA exemption levels, or support from a trust fund or other income source.

The individual's contribution forms a portion of the funding you are paid each month as the home sharing provider. In most cases, the individual receives the full PWD amount directly. In this situation, it is up to you to collect the user fee from the individual. Through arrangements with MEIA, you can arrange to receive individual contributions directly to you by cheque. Contact your local MEIA office for more information.

The individual should also be supported to apply for an annual bus pass through the MEIA office. This costs \$45 per year.

MEIA REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Home sharing providers must support individuals to complete forms that are provided by MEIA every month. Individuals must report any monthly income and must note other changes to information requested by MEIA.

If the individual does not receive his/her monthly cheque on time, the home sharing provider must immediately contact MEIA to prevent problems and/or loss of benefits.

From time to time, an assigned employment assistance worker from MEIA may wish to review the individual's situation and confirm that the individual is still eligible for PWD benefits. This typically involves an in-person meeting. For this reason, it is extremely important to ensure that the individual's financial records are in order.

Individuals are able to earn up to \$500 each month without any adjustment to their benefits. Those individuals who have earnings are expected to maintain payroll stubs for at least one year as proof of income.

Individuals must also be aware that, according to PWD guidelines, their ongoing PWD benefits may be jeopardized if they have more than \$3,000 in assets (e.g., savings in a bank account, term deposits). Individuals who have the potential to surpass this limit, must be supported to responsibly prepare for this situation (e.g., setting up a trust fund).

The BC Coalition of People with Disabilities is an excellent source of information about PWD benefits. The coalition has produced a series of plain-language fact sheets about a variety of topics. These can be accessed using the following link:

www.bccpd.bc.ca/s/AdvocacyAccess.asp#help

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

It is part of the home sharing provider's role to support the individual to budget his or her money and to implement some form of tracking system. Where individuals require assistance to manage their funds, an accounting system must be developed that tracks income, expenditures, and savings.

Although the specific system can be customized to the unique needs of the individual, the following are useful guidelines:

- PWD benefits and other forms of income assistance, wages, clothing allowances, GST rebates, and other sources of income must be accounted for
- individuals should be supported to submit or seek assistance for submitting annual income tax returns so that GST returns are regularly received

For money spent directly from the individual's bank account, the system you use can be as simple as documenting expenditures and deposits in a transaction record — obtainable free of charge from the bank.

Information pertaining to the funds and records of the individual must be kept in a secure and private place in the home and the individual should be as involved as possible in managing all aspects of his/her own money.

Whatever method you use, the important thing is to keep it simple and to **keep it up**.



SUCCESS

Successful Practices

When we say that we are applying successful practices for home sharing, we mean that we are using everything we know and all available resources to meet the needs of the people we support. There is a recognition that everyone who lives in a home sharing arrangement should be able to expect certain things and should have confidence that the support provided in this environment will be of a high caliber.

As more and more people are choosing to live in home sharing arrangements, it is important that all are aware of identified successful practices in the field and that all look to build upon those practices based upon the unique needs of the individuals involved. To ensure that this is the case, CLBC and home sharing providers need to work together.

Successful practices are techniques or methodologies that, through experience and research, have proven to provide a desired result. A commitment to using the successful practices in any field is a commitment to using all of the knowledge and resources at one's disposal to ensure success.

CLBC'S COMMITMENT TO SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

CLBC believes in a process of continuous quality improvement. This means that we are always looking for ways to do an even better job for the individuals and families we support. We learn from our past experiences and actively seek feedback from our stakeholders to set new goals for the organization.

The introduction of standards specific for home sharing and our commitment to a process of accreditation are two of the ways that help to ensure that we are operating according to successful practices of the field.

UNIVERSAL STANDARDS

Until April 2007, we did not have a specific set of standards for home sharing. Instead, our contractors used standards that were in place for other residential services. These were often inappropriate and impossible to apply within that setting.

A new set of standards and supporting materials were required to ensure that individuals in home sharing arrangements consistently receive high quality support, that our home sharing providers understand their roles and responsibilities, and our staff are able to clearly assess the degree to which home sharing providers are meeting established standards.

CLBC supports the adoption of universal standards for home sharing because this will:

- provide a reliable mechanism for continuous quality improvement
- provide a set of measurements for you and for others to determine if the services you provide are meeting CLBC expectations
- define CLBC expectations, processes, and outcomes of programs and services for the individuals we support
- allow us to confirm accountability
- provide guidance in how to provide high quality services

ACCREDITATION

To help ensure the individuals and families who access CLBC-funded supports receive ongoing high quality service, CLBC has chosen to go through a process of accreditation. Our home sharing services will be part of that review and we must be able to show that identified standards are consistently implemented.

Accreditation is a process in which an external party assesses an organization for compliance to a set of standards that support quality services. The standards must be met by all those who represent the organization. It must then be verified that those standards are met. This is done by a survey of the organization. To maintain accreditation, surveys are conducted on a regular basis (usually every one to three years).

There are two accepted accrediting bodies for organizations in a contractual relationship with CLBC — CARF and COA. CARF is the acronym for the Commission on Accreditation and Rehabilitation Facilities and COA is the acronym for the Council on Accreditation.

The home sharing standards that have been developed and adopted by CLBC are consistent with the standards required for accreditation by both of these organizations.

YOUR ROLE

As a home sharing provider, it is important that you make an effort to learn about successful practices. The following are just a few strategies that can help you to stay up-to-date:

- **research** — check out websites, bookstores, and libraries for relevant information (specific to home sharing and about community living in general)
- **network** — connect with other home sharing providers and provider networks (e.g., EnVision), service provision agencies, and CLBC offices
- **learn** — attend workshops, conferences, and other training opportunities

Keep in mind that things are changing all of the time. Regularly refresh your knowledge base and stay connected. Be prepared to share your own experiences and pass on what you have learned. By learning from one another, successful practices develop and standards are enriched.

STILL CONFUSED?

As simple as it sounds, applying successful practices on a day-to-day basis can be complicated. Michael Hawkins and his company, Creative Community Solutions, have produced a document that can help. In October of 2006, they released *Successful Practices for Home Sharing Services*.

The goal of this document is to give home sharing providers first-hand knowledge about practices that will help them meet standards established by CLBC. The intent is to share real-life successes gathered from across BC. This resource guide offers suggestions on how to promote a high quality of life for individuals with a developmental disability.

HOW TO USE THE RESOURCE

Each home sharing arrangement is different and support is delivered according to the unique needs of the individual. What works in one home will not necessarily work in another. As none of the examples provided in *Successful Practices for Home Sharing Services* is carved in stone, you are asked to use the information at your own discretion based on your knowledge of the individual you support as well as the unique circumstances at hand.

The information in this guide has been arranged for easy access and use. Each standard is accompanied by a rationale that clarifies the intent of the standard as well as successful practice data that demonstrates how standards can be met. Examples of exceptional service are also provided.

To receive a copy of this useful resource guide, home sharing providers are encouraged to contact Creative Community Solutions directly by e-mailing CCS3@hotmail.com. You may also contact your local CLBC quality services office or download the document from CLBC's website at:

www.communitylivingbc.ca.



Standards for Home Sharing

Many individuals and families have been anxiously awaiting the introduction standards that protect the underlying values of home sharing while offering appropriate safeguards.

The Provincial Monitoring Group (PMG) facilitated the development of a draft set of standards for home sharing that incorporated successful practices within the field (2002). These standards were reviewed and revised in October 2006 by Creative Community Solutions, a sister company to the PMG.

After a formal consultation process that invited feedback from key stakeholders, the standards were formally endorsed and adopted by CLBC in April 2007. These are now used as universal guidelines for BC.

Keep in mind that standards are guidelines for successful practice. They do not prescribe a single, "right" way of doing things. To successfully meet each standard, you must consider the needs and preferences of the person you support. As the person's needs and preferences may change over time, you need to constantly modify your approach and priorities.

The information below highlights the 15 standards that have been identified as critical to home sharing arrangements. Standards cover the following four domains:

- planning
- health, safety, and advocacy
- service delivery
- resources

Each standard includes a rationale, specific indicators, and various service outcome expectations. The complete Standards for Home Sharing can be found on our website and are available through your local CLBC quality service office. Questions about the standards can be directed to your local analyst. Contact information for each office can be found on CLBC's website or by calling head office at 604-664-0101 or toll-free at 1-877-660-2522.

PLANNING

person-centred planning: Each individual is supported to develop and accomplish long- and short-term goals through a personalized planning process. Home sharing providers implement plans, identify progress, and make adjustments to meet changing needs.

health care planning: Home sharing providers ensure that each individual with significant health care issues is supported by planning that identifies critical health care needs.

transition planning: When an individual moves into his/her new home, there is careful preparation to provide continuity for the individual and to ensure the home sharing providers and assistants are aware of each individual's needs.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND ADVOCACY

individual care and support: The home provides an environment that encourages the physical and emotional health and well-being of each individual. Medical and dental needs are attended to for each individual and special-care needs are met for individuals with physical disabilities.

safety and security: The home guidelines and procedures are designed for the safety and security of all individuals with particular attention to the special needs of individuals with physical disabilities and those who are unaware of danger.

rights: Home sharing providers and assistants respect every individual's rights and act as an advocate for these rights.

home atmosphere: Home sharing providers provide a home-like environment that allows individuals to live a rewarding life.

SERVICE-DELIVERY

activities: Each individual has the opportunity to take part in daily activities and participate with as few restrictions as possible in typical home living. Individuals have the opportunity and means to communicate their wishes and feelings, to develop satisfying social relationships, and develop skills that promote maximum independence.

family and friends: Home sharing providers and assistants welcome the involvement of family and friends in the lives of each individual.

community involvement: Home sharing providers make full and effective use of community resources. Home sharing providers and assistants initiate community contacts that promote inclusion for all individuals.

RESOURCES

leadership and co-ordination of support: The home sharing providers are qualified and experienced and have regular, direct contact with each individual receiving service, assistants, and others involved in the individual's life.

staffing (where applicable): The home is staffed to meet the needs of each individual with an attitude of respect for each individual and an underlying commitment to providing a good quality of life.

training of assistants: Home sharing providers ensure that assistants are familiar with their responsibilities and receive necessary training. Assistants demonstrate suitability for providing good quality support to the individuals.

guidelines and procedures: The home has guidelines and procedures that meet all requirements of health and safety, fiscal responsibility, individual documentation, and record-keeping.

communication and problem-resolution: The individual experiences meaningful relationships that promote mutual respect, independence, and quality of life. Communication channels are clear. Effective ways of preventing problems and resolving individual differences are used and encouraged.





Important Policies

Policies are clearly-written rules that define the expectations CLBC has of home sharing providers in specific situations. They guide the practice of our own staff and interact with established standards and identified contract outcomes to ensure the home sharing arrangement is positive for the individual and the home sharing provider.

Many of these can be found on CLBC's website. If you have questions about any of these policies or specific aspects of the policies, please contact your local quality service office. Contact information for each office can be found on our website or by calling our head office at 604-664-0101 or toll-free at 1-877-660-2522.

POLICIES OF INTEREST

The following policies govern CLBC practice and may be of interest to home sharing providers:

- eligibility for CLBC supports and services
- CLBC waitlist
- individual and family support
- complaints resolution
- CLBC confidentiality and consent
- adult guardianship
- confirmation of individual financial contribution
- standards for home sharing
- recruitment of home sharing providers
- approval of home sharing providers
- monitoring of home sharing contracts
- respite guidelines for home sharing

A DAY IN THE LIFE

The following policies guide day-to-day practices within home sharing for adults:

- criminal record checks
- investigations of abuse and neglect
- critical incidents
- behavioural interventions
- bathing guidelines
- lost or missing person

Within this section, we provide basic direction about how to apply some of the above policies. However, **home sharing providers are required to familiarize themselves with the policy and complete guidelines.**

CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS

In an ongoing effort to ensure the safety and well-being of the individuals we support, CLBC requires that all service providers and contractors complete and submit a current criminal record check.

This requirement applies to the home sharing contractor and all members of the home over 18 years of age. CLBC staff review this information prior to approving the contractor to provide support and at least every five years thereafter.

Home sharing providers must also ensure that criminal record checks have been completed for relief staff, respite providers, and other paid assistants. These are to be reviewed at least every five years. Criminal record checks are not required for an individual's friends or family members. However, the home sharing provider must still assess factors relating to the health and safety of the individual.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Roles and responsibilities of various parties are described in detail in CLBC's *Criminal Record Checks: Adults* policy.

Practice guidelines are also described in detail in the above-noted policy along with procedures.

CLBC staff are responsible for reviewing the criminal record of home sharing providers and other adult members of the home. Home sharing providers are responsible for reviewing the criminal record of relief staff, respite providers, and other paid assistants.

The well-being of the individual is paramount and must not be compromised. If the review leaves any doubt or concern about the potential safety of the individual, the applicant should not be approved to provide support.

INVESTIGATIONS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Individuals supported by home sharing providers under contract with CLBC have the right to live, work, play, learn, and participate in everyday activities in a safe and secure environment, free from abuse or neglect of any kind. To that end, no form of abuse or neglect to a person receiving supports will be tolerated.

Abuse is the deliberate mistreatment of an adult that causes physical, mental or emotional harm, or damage to or loss of assets. Specific types of abuse include: physical, psychosocial or emotional, verbal, sexual, financial, and medication abuse.

Neglect is defined as any deprivation of an individual's requirements for food, shelter, medical attention or supervision that endangers the safety of an individual. It includes any failure to provide necessary care, assistance, guidance, basic necessities or attention to an adult that causes, or is likely to cause, serious physical, mental or emotional harm or substantial damage to or loss of assets.

CLBC and home sharing providers must work together to prevent abuse or neglect and to ensure any corrective actions recommended by investigations are put into place. Joint effort is also required to report, document, and investigate all incidents of known or suspected abuse and neglect.

Any person who, upon investigation, is found to have inflicted abuse or neglect upon a person supported will be subject to consequences up to, and including, legal action. CLBC may also make changes to contracts with the involved home sharing provider.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Roles and responsibilities of various parties are described in detail in CLBC's policy on *Investigations of Abuse and Neglect*.

Practice guidelines are also described in detail in the above-noted policy along with procedures.

It is important to note that home sharing providers who are under contract with CLBC are required as one of the conditions of their contract to notify CLBC of any critical, serious, or unusual incidents involving the individual. This includes incidents of known or suspected abuse or neglect.



CRITICAL INCIDENTS

The preventing, reporting, investigating, reviewing and receiving reports of critical incidents is a formal safeguard designed to help protect the safety, health, well-being, and rights of individuals who receive CLBC-funded services.

The success of this safeguard is dependent on a collaborative approach. CLBC works co-operatively with others to:

- ensure conformance to this policy
- continuously improve the quality of services being provided
- reduce the number and severity of reportable critical incidents
- CLBC staff ensure that all reportable incidents are reviewed as per this policy.

Reportable **critical incidents** are serious or unusual events that involve an individual receiving CLBC-funded services.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Roles and responsibilities of various parties are outlined in CLBC's *Critical Incidents: Adults policy*.

Practice guidelines regarding the prevention, reporting, and review of critical incidents are also described in detail in the above-noted policy.

Home sharing providers are required to report all critical incidents within 24 hours of the incident's occurrence. Home sharing providers must complete and submit the appropriate *Critical Incident Report* according to the instructions provided on the form.

The following critical incidents are **always** reviewed and followed-up by CLBC staff:

- abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, financial)
- neglect
- poisoning
- suicide or suicide attempt
- sentinel event
- use or possession of weapons
- use or possession of licit or illicit drugs

The following critical incidents must be reviewed by CLBC staff and **may** require further action by the assigned analyst:

- death
- unexpected illness
- disease/parasite outbreak
- fall
- motor vehicle accident
- other injury
- disruption of services
- aggressive/unusual behaviour
- missing/wandering person
- medication error
- use of seclusion, restraint, or exclusionary time-out
- communicable disease, biohazardous accident, or use or infection control

BEHAVIOURAL INTERVENTIONS

Any application of behavioural interventions must ensure and protect the human rights and well-being of each individual. Every service provider and contractor must develop and follow written policies for the use of behavioural interventions.

Behavioural interventions must be consistent with CLBC's philosophy, values, and practices. The following principles apply:

- protection of the individual's rights
- positive focus to change
- limitations on use of restrictive measures
- concern for the individual's long-term interest

Behavioural interventions are those practices and strategies used when responding to individuals who exhibit challenging behaviours.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Roles and responsibilities of various parties are outlined in CLBC's policy on *Behavioural Interventions*.

Practice guidelines and procedures regarding the use of behavioural interventions are also described in detail in the above-noted policy.

In general, home sharing providers are expected to adopt the following practices when considering behavioural interventions:

- develop written policies
- provide training for relief staff, respite providers, and other assistants
- document all behavioural interventions
- obtain authorization before using restrictive methods
- ensure that unacceptable procedures are never used



BATHING GUIDELINES

CLBC and the Ministry of Health have jointly developed a bathing policy that reflects the need to respect an individual's wish for privacy while addressing potential risk.

Service providers and contractors are expected to be proactive and address any potential risks associated with bathing or the provision of personal care. Proactive measures include, but are not limited to:

- development of appropriate bathing and personal care guidelines
- exclusive use of products that have been approved by the manufacturer as safe for use in a jet tub
- regular maintenance of jetted tubs and other bathing or personal care equipment (e.g., lifts, bath stretchers, change tables, shower chairs, call bells, etc.)

Guidelines must be developed for each individual. These must clearly acknowledge personal preferences, identify associated risks, outline minimizing strategies, and promote safe practices.

Individuals must be involved in all discussions concerning bathing and personal care. Planning in this area must address actual risks and anticipate potential risks.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Roles and responsibilities of various parties are outlined in CLBC's policy on *Bathing Guidelines*.

Practice guidelines and procedures for bathing are also described in detail in the above-noted policy.

In general, home sharing providers are expected to consider the individual's rights and demonstrate that planning reflects the need to minimize existing or potential risks.



MISSING OR WANDERING PERSON

Home sharing providers must take proactive measures to ensure that individuals do not go missing. Individuals should be supported to explore their neighbourhood and review basic safety practices to minimize the risk of becoming lost or confused.

The home sharing provider must develop a missing or wandering person protocol that can be referenced by all who support the individual. The protocol should include a recent photograph and a list of the individual's favourite locations or likely places to search. It should also clearly indicate the specific conditions under which the individual should be considered missing.

A missing or wandering person is a reportable critical incident and home sharing providers must be guided by that policy when reporting this type of event.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Roles and responsibilities of various parties are outlined in CLBC's policy on *Missing or Wandering Person*. Specific practice guidelines are also described within this policy.

In general, home sharing providers are expected to initiate the following procedures as soon as the individual is discovered missing:

- co-ordinate a comprehensive and systematic search of the area in which the individual was last seen
- prepare a description of the individual that can be provided to others assisting with the search
- contact the local police department and advise as to the degree of urgency
- contact CLBC at your local office, or for after-hours phone 660-4927 or 1-800-663-9122

As the search progresses, the home sharing provider must assume a leadership role and provide all involved with regular updates.

A detailed *Critical Incident Report* must be submitted to CLBC within 24 hours of the individual being deemed missing.





Monitoring

CLBC monitors supports and services at the individual, resource, and system level to ensure that specific service standards including those related to safety and security, individual support, and rights are met.

Physicians, specialized mental health team members, Health Services for Community Living staff as well as the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee, the police, and Coroner's Office all have integral roles to play in ensuring the safety and well-being of individuals supported by CLBC. These parties have very specific mandates and monitoring requirements.

Family, friends, advocates, and community members also have a role to play in monitoring services for people with a developmental disability. This is seen as a type of informal monitoring.

An example of formal monitoring in home sharing is when an analyst visits your home and completes a monitoring tool such as the *Health and Safety Checklist for Home Sharing* or the *Monitoring Tool for Home Sharing* to evaluate the services you provide for the individual you support in your home.

HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKLIST

The *Health and Safety Checklist for Home Sharing* was introduced in 2006. It is consistent with endorsed standards for home sharing and the *Home Sharing Monitoring Tool*. It can be used in conjunction with other documents or can be used as a stand-alone review.

This seven-page document assesses important health and safety features in each of the following areas:

- health care planning
- individual care and support
- safety and security
- home atmosphere

Each area lists a number of specific service outcome expectations and associated indicators. The monitor must provide a status rating for each indicator. The monitor may indicate a status of “yes” or “no.” In some cases, a particular item may be “not applicable.” The reviewer is encouraged to make comments for each service outcome area. These could include recommendations for improvements or notes about exceptional compliance that could ultimately be shared with other home sharing providers.

Home sharing providers are responsible for completing the *Health and Safety Checklist for Home Sharing* as part of ongoing self-assessment and quality improvement. The review process may flag issues that can easily be addressed while others may require more in-depth review or consultation with CLBC staff.

The focus should always be on opportunities to support or enhance successful practices. CLBC staff are available to help you interpret the form and to address questions or concerns that arise as a result of the review. CLBC staff review all completed assessments and regularly conduct on-site reviews.

A sample of this form is available on CLBC’s website or through your local CLBC quality service office.



MONITORING TOOL

Although the *Monitoring Tool for Home Sharing* can be referenced by home sharing providers and assistants, its primary purpose is to provide guidance to CLBC staff who are evaluating the quality of a particular home sharing situation.

This document allows the monitor to determine whether the home sharing provider is meeting expectations in each area or whether improvement is required.

The *Monitoring Tool for Home Sharing* promotes the practice of continuous quality improvement in that it allows the monitor and home sharing provider to make recommendations on how support in each specific area could be further enhanced. This is accompanied by a detailed action plan that identifies the goal for improvement, the person responsible for making the improvement, and a target date for completion.

For each domain, the following format is used:

- standard
- service outcome expectation (various indicators for review)
- assessment (meets expectations or needs improvement)
- key findings (narrative)
- action plan to address improvements needed (goal, person responsible, target date, completion date)

CLBC uses the *Monitoring Tool for Home Sharing* periodically to ensure that endorsed standards are in place within all home sharing environments.

A sample of this form is available on CLBC's website or through your local CLBC quality service office.



Good Lives in Welcoming Communities

CLBC works with others to create good lives in welcoming communities for the individuals and families we serve. By sharing a home with a person with a developmental disability, you are already helping us to achieve this vision. However, this is a priority that needs ongoing attention.

What defines a good life for the person you support today may be quite different than what defines a good life in the future. Needs change, priorities shift, and relationships evolve. As a home sharing provider, you must be sensitive to this fact and must constantly look for ways to build an inclusive community for the person you support. Everyone needs similar things to have a good life – caring relationships, opportunities for participation, and power over the conditions of your daily life. These are the things that promote good lives in welcoming communities.

CARING RELATIONSHIPS

Without the benefit of genuine and caring relationships, life would be rather dull and kind of scary. Relationships are one of the biggest contributors to personal happiness. They help to keep life interesting and keep us engaged. They expand our world and help us feel safe, loved, and included.

As a home sharing provider, you are responsible for ensuring that the individual you support has the opportunity to form meaningful and healthy relationships. Many people connect naturally and easily with others. However, it is important to remember that those with a developmental disability often have to work very hard to develop and maintain connections with others. That is where you can help.

There are several things you can do to ensure the individual you support experiences the benefits of caring relationships.

NATURAL CONNECTIONS

Pay attention to the people who take a genuine interest in the person you support. In some cases, this will include the individual's family members and friends. In some cases, it will include members of your own network. Let the individual determine the quantity and quality of interaction. Support the individual to strengthen valued connections and to set boundaries in relationships that are challenging or negative.

Beyond this tight inner circle, there is a wide range of people with whom the individual may have a meaningful relationship. The level of involvement in the individual's life varies with each person. You will find that there are many caring and concerned community members who take an active interest in getting to know the person you support. Some examples include:

- clerks at a grocery store
- servers at a coffee shop or restaurant
- neighbours
- co-workers or classmates
- members of the individual's church or another community group
- people who regularly ride the same bus

These relationships have the potential to enrich the person's day-to-day experiences and help ensure the individual is safe. Those people listed previously connect the individual to community and begin to look forward to seeing the individual and notice if something isn't quite right (e.g., the individual doesn't turn up in the expected location at the usual time).

As the individual's social web expands, opportunities for participation in preferred activities and comfort in social situations both increase. As a home sharing provider, anything you can do to set this snowball of relationships in motion is of great benefit to the person you support.

Keep in mind that the individual may need ongoing support to keep these relationships in place and working well. Here are a few of the things you can do to help:

- offer suggestions on how to deal with any conflicts
- encourage and support the person to make and keep social appointments
- open the home to those who are important to the individual

PERSONAL NETWORKS

In addition to the natural and informal connections noted above, individuals may benefit from a more structured approach to relationship-building. One option to ensure the individual has a number of people to count on is to establish a personal network. This typically involves bringing together a group of people who have a relationship with the individual and who are willing to advise, encourage, and advocate for the person.

Personal networks are one of the most effective safeguards an individual with a developmental disability, or anyone, can have. They have the potential to reduce feelings of isolation, protect against abuse and neglect, create opportunities for meaningful life experiences, and enhance an individual's quality of life. Many networks include a mix of people who have a natural connection to the individual (family members, friends, community contacts) and those who are paid to support the person in some capacity. Some network members will be very involved and others will play more of a peripheral role. The thing that all members must have in common is a genuine concern for and interest in the individual and his/her well-being.

Although there are many resources available to those who would like to develop a personal network, one of the very best in BC is the Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network (PLAN). According to the organization's website, PLAN is committed to:

- the development and maintenance of personal support networks
- the development of a personal network of committed men and women who join together in a relationship with the individual and each other
- using the network to bridge the gap between living on the edge of community and being a full and active participant in that community

If you would like to learn more about personal networks or would like more information about PLAN, view the **RESOURCES** section of this manual or visit their website at:

www.plan.ca.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPATION

Without interesting and life-defining experiences, one day just blends into the next and we may find ourselves on auto-pilot just watching the sun rise and set. The things we do help define us, give meaning to our lives, and provide us with excitement and inspiration.

As a home sharing provider you have a responsibility to ensure the individual you support has the opportunity for a rich and fulfilling life. To achieve this, it is important for individuals to participate in activities that are of their own choosing and that they find interesting, entertaining, and rewarding.

Following, are the standards relating to activities and community involvement.

ACTIVITIES

A variety of daily living experiences will support the individual to gain the skills and confidence required to comfortably interact with members of the community. To achieve this, the individual must have a variety of opportunities for growth and development. The following standards are specific to this area:

- individual's skill development is encouraged and supported
- individual participates in preferred, interesting, and challenging activities
- individual is encouraged to participate in home living
- individual is supported to learn skills that support future independence

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Individuals can develop a sense of belonging in their neighbourhood. If the individual you support contributes to the community and becomes involved in community activities, he/she will be recognized for these contributions. The following standards relate to this area:

- individual is supported to use community-based services
- individual is supported to be a contributing member of his or her community
- home sharing provider and assistants seek and use information and support from community sources

POWER OVER THE CONDITIONS OF ONE'S DAILY LIFE

Without the ability to take control over the conditions of our daily lives, we tend to stagnate. We stop dreaming, hoping, and striving. We feel helpless and hopeless. We stop setting goals and just wait for things to happen.

As a home sharing provider, you have a responsibility to ensure that the individual you support experiences a sense of empowerment over decisions both large and small.

PLANNING

It is expected that the individual you support has the opportunity to set and accomplish personally-identified short- and long-term goals. This is a critical part of ensuring the individual you support is living a good life in a welcoming community. There are a number of standards that relate specifically to this issue.

The individual's plan must be written and must clearly identify goals, an action plan, and target dates. For some, this plan will be quite intricate and will include several goals that span a number of areas (relationships, personal skill development, employment, education, etc.). For others, the plan is quite simple and may include only a few key goals.

While planning does not have to be complicated, it must include certain key elements:

- individual should be involved in developing and implementing the plan
- planning process should meet the needs of the individual
- individual decides who should participate in developing the plan
- plan should clearly direct service
- plan should be used to determine whether activities and services are consistent with the person's desires and goals
- plan should be written or documented in a manner that makes sense for the individual (e.g., include graphics, pictures)
- plan should be regularly reviewed and updated according to the changing needs and preferences of the individual

Completing a thorough planning process will ensure that the individual feels as though he/she is in control of daily life and will ultimately contribute to a sense of well-being.

For resources and sample forms that relate to planning, please contact your local CLBC quality service office. Contact information for these offices can be found on CLBC's website in the Your Community section.

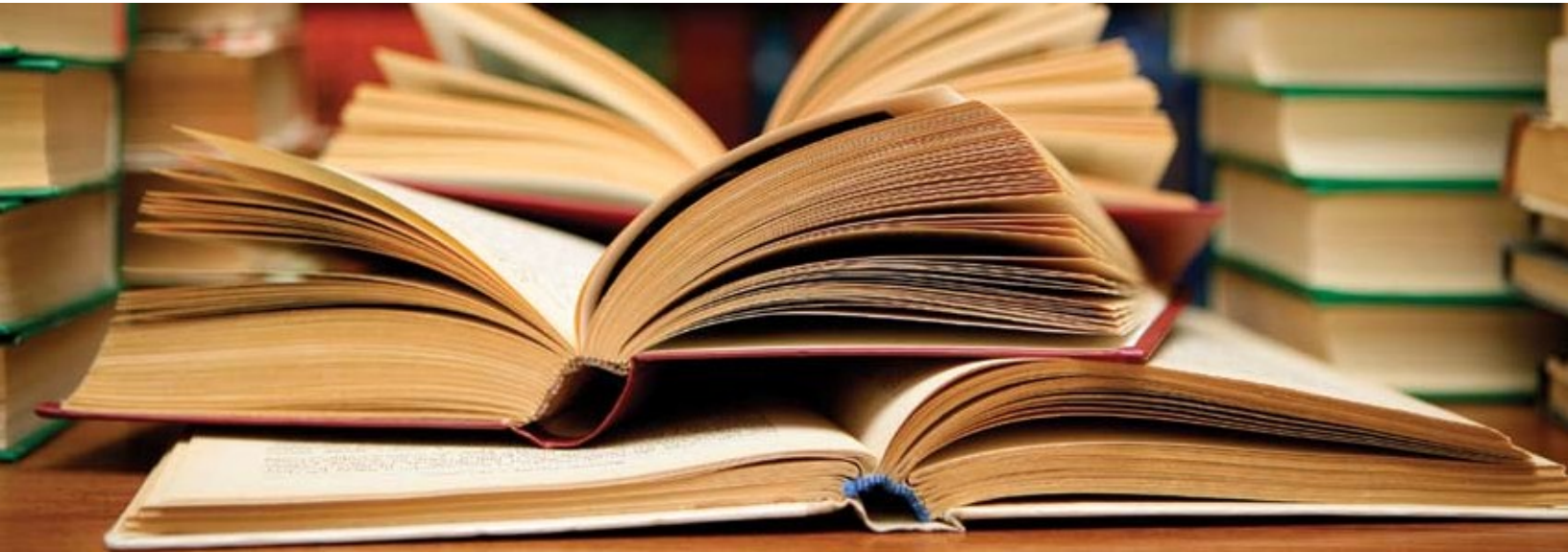
As a home sharing provider, you are responsible for co-ordinating resources and services on behalf of the individual. This includes paid services that are provided to the individual such as respite, community integration programs, educational programs, employment support, and professional services. It also includes the home sharing support that you are contracted to provide.

You must pay attention to whether services meet the needs of the person you support. This includes making sure the:

- purpose of the service is consistent with the person's identified needs, goals, and preferences
- individual is comfortable with the manner in which the service is delivered (including the time the service is offered, activities, teaching strategies, people providing the support, etc.)
- service providers treat the individual well and have a good relationship with the person

If paid services are not meeting the needs of the individual you support, it is your responsibility to help the person make the appropriate adjustments. In many cases, you can solve existing problems with a simple phone call or by making a few small changes.

Should a more dramatic change be required (e.g., change to a new provider) or should direct contact with the provider not produce desired results, CLBC can offer assistance. Quality service analysts can liaise with service providers to ensure that contract obligations are being fulfilled. Facilitators can work with individuals to develop or revise an *Individual Support Plan* that clearly outlines the individual's dreams, hopes, and needs as well as the supports required to achieve this vision.



As a home sharing provider, every day is different. While previous sections review general guidelines that apply to all home sharing arrangements, this section is intended to provide you with information about resources that will be useful in specific situations or for certain individuals.

The section has been organized alphabetically according to the resource. While we hope you find the following information useful, we encourage you to contact each resource directly with specific issues or concerns.

The following resources have been included:

- Advocate for Service Quality
- British Columbia Association for Community Living
- British Columbia Coalition of People with Disabilities
- EnVision Society for Choice and Inclusion
- Family Support Institute
- Health Services for Community Living
- Industry Canada Community Access Program
- Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee
- Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network
- Representation Agreement Resource Centre

Links to many other valuable resources can be found on the CLBC website in the Links to Resources section under What We Do.

ADVOCATE FOR SERVICE QUALITY

The Advocate for Service Quality is appointed by and reports to the Minister of Children and Family Development. The advocate does not work directly for the government.

ROLE OF THE ADVOCATE

The advocate's job is to help adults with developmental disabilities and their families receive good quality services. The advocate can help with services from CLBC, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, other ministries, or service agencies in the community.

WHEN TO CALL THE ADVOCATE

If an individual has a problem with services, he or she can contact the advocate to discuss it. The advocate will try to resolve the issue. The advocate also encourages and helps adults to advocate for themselves. For example, the advocate will try to help if individuals:

- do not like the services they are getting
- think they are not being treated fairly or with respect
- have problems with a social worker, financial aid worker, or support worker
- have problems with where they live

CONTACT INFORMATION

In Vancouver, phone 604-775-1238.

Outside Vancouver, call Enquiry BC and ask them to transfer you to the Office of the Advocate for Service Quality at 604-775-1238. Victoria residents call Enquiry BC at 250-387-6121. Elsewhere in the province, call Enquiry BC at 1-800-663-7867.

Mailing Address:

Office of the Advocate for Service Quality
820 – 999 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC
V5Z 1K5

For more information about the Advocate for Service Quality, visit their website at:

www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/getting_help/advocate_service_quality.htm.

Resources

BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY LIVING

The British Columbia Association for Community Living (BCACL) is the provincial chapter of the Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL). Both the provincial and national organizations advocate for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

BCACL is dedicated to promoting the participation of people with developmental disabilities in all aspects of community life. The organization supports activities dedicated to building inclusive communities that value the diverse abilities of all people. Over the years, BCACL has grown to include individuals, families, volunteers, and over 70 associations dedicated to making sure that people with developmental disabilities are able to enjoy their right to lead active and productive lives in their communities.

SELF-ADVOCACY CAUCUS

The BCACL Self-Advocacy Caucus (SAC) comprises 14 self-advocates from all over BC who are elected every year at the BCACL annual general meeting by other self-advocates. The purpose of the SAC is to:

- talk about issues important to self-advocates in BC
- make sure action is taken on these issues at provincial and local levels
- lobby for changes that will benefit self-advocates
- receive input from different areas of the province
- provide support to each other
- provide leadership development and training for self-advocates

CONTACT INFORMATION

phone: 604-777-9100
e-mail: info@bcacl.org

Mailing Address:

British Columbia Association for Community Living
227 6th Street
New Westminster, BC
V3L 3A5

For more information about BCACL, visit their website at:

www.bcacl.org.

Resources

BC COALITION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The BC Coalition of People with Disabilities (BCCPD) is a provincial, cross-disability advocacy organization. Their mandate is to raise public and political awareness of issues that concern people with disabilities. Through their work, they hope to facilitate the full participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of society and to promote independence.

To meet these goals BCCPD:

- advocates with all levels of government on policies and attitudes that affect people with disabilities
- promotes public awareness of issues through conferences, special projects and the media
- provide individual and group advocacy for people with disabilities
- serve on government panels and committees
- share information and self-help skills with individuals and disability groups

ADVOCACY ACCESS

The BCCPD Advocacy Access Program is a centre of excellence for provincial disability benefits and Canadian Pension Plan (CPP) Disability Benefits advocacy. Trained advocates welcome people with all disabilities to make use of one-to-one advocacy services for mental health consumers as well as people with physical, cognitive, and sensory disabilities.

The Advocacy Access Program began years ago as a small volunteer service. It now serves over 25,000 people each year and is one of BCCPD's busiest programs.

PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM

- provide one-to-one advocacy assistance to people with mental, physical, cognitive, and sensory disabilities
- educate people with disabilities on their rights
- share self-help skills
- provide information on resources for people with disabilities
- provide referrals to community services for people with disabilities
- advocacy access team

DISABILITY BENEFITS HELP SHEETS

The BCCPD has prepared a series of help sheets on disability benefits under the *Employment and Assistance* legislation. The series of extremely informative fact sheets can be viewed online and/or downloaded and printed. The files are regularly updated.

Resources

TOPICS:

- *The Persons with Disabilities Benefit Application*
- *Checklist for the Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Benefit*
- *Appealing Denial of the PWD Benefit: The Reconsideration*
- *Appealing Denial of the PWD Benefit: The Appeal Tribunal*
- *Persons with Persistent and Multiple Barriers (PPMB) to Employment Application*
- *Enhanced Medical Coverage*
- *Trusts for Persons with Disabilities (PWD)*
- *Employment and People with Disabilities*
- *Employment, Education and Training Supplements for People with Disabilities*
- *Appealing Denial of the PPMB Benefit: The Reconsideration Request*
- *Appealing Denial of the PPMB Benefit: The Appeal Tribunal*
- *Income Assistance Application Process for People with Disabilities*
- *Rate Amounts for PWD and PPMB Benefits*

CONTACT INFORMATION

General:

phone: 604-875-0188
toll free: 1-800-663-1278
TTY: 604-875-8835
e-mail: feedback@bccpd.bc.ca

Advocacy Access Direct Lines:

phone: 604-872-1278
toll free: 1-800-663-1278

Mailing Address:

BC Coalition of People with Disabilities
#204 – 456 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC
V5Y 1R3

For more information about the BCCPD or to download any of their help sheets and resource guides, free of charge, visit their website at:

www.bccpd.bc.ca.

Resources

ENVISION SOCIETY FOR CHOICE & INCLUSION

Home sharing providers may be interested in EnVision Society for Choice and Inclusion. EnVision is a provincial network that was created as a result of the amalgamation of three former home sharing provider societies and two representative groups from various communities. EnVision evolved from a strong belief that home sharing providers have a need to advocate for the individuals they support, stay informed, contribute responsibly to the betterment of services and supports, and provide a positive influence for community living at all levels.

EnVision welcomes individuals, family members, home sharing providers, and organizations as members.

CONTACT INFORMATION

phone: 250-479-8145
e-mail: envisionsocietyofbc@shaw.ca

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box #30038
Saanich Center Postal Outlet
Victoria, BC
V8X 5E1

For more information about EnVision or the Essence of Life, visit their website at:

www.envisionsociety.org.

FAMILY SUPPORT INSTITUTE

The Family Support Institute (FSI) is a province-wide organization whose purpose is to strengthen and support families faced with the extraordinary circumstances that come with having a family member who has a disability. They believe that families are the best resources available to support one another. Directed by families, the FSI provides information, training, and province-wide networking to assist families and their communities to build upon and share their strengths.

The FSI is unique in Canada. It began with the help of the British Columbia Association of Community Living in 1986 in response to the needs and requests of families of people with disabilities.

Trained local parents volunteer in communities across BC to be regional resource parents. A regional resource parent is the parent of a child with a disability who can offer you a variety of supports. FSI also offers workshops, information, and a lending library.

CONTACT INFORMATION

phone: 604-540-8374
toll free: 1-800-441-5403
e-mail: fsi@fsibc.com

Mailing Address:

Family Support Institute
227 6th Street
New Westminster, BC
V3L 3A5

For more information about FSI, visit their website at:

www.familysupportbc.com.

Resources

HEALTH SERVICES FOR COMMUNITY LIVING

The Ministry of Health has resources dedicated to the development and delivery of specialized community-based nursing and rehabilitation services for individuals supported by CLBC. The Health Services for Community Living (HSCL) program, nutrition and dysphagia services, preventative dental health services, mental health services, and behaviour and communication support are included in this network.

HEALTH CARE PLANNING

HSCL nurses are an excellent resource for home sharing providers. Nurses are available in most areas of BC and will help develop a health care plan that addresses the specific health care needs of an individual with a developmental disability.

SPECIALIZED NURSING AND REHABILITATION SERVICES

Individuals with developmental disabilities are entitled to receive the same health services from the same health care providers as individuals without developmental disabilities. In addition, specialized nursing and rehabilitation services and dental health services that target individuals with developmental disabilities are available under the umbrella of Home Health.

This framework operates throughout most of BC to promote a high quality of service while allowing for the maximum integration of individuals with developmental disabilities in mainstream society. The exception is the Capital Health Region (Victoria) where HSCL services are fully integrated with Home Care Nursing and Community Rehabilitation Services. In this region, nurses and therapists provide home health services to all consumers regardless of the existence of any developmental disabilities.

REFERRAL TO OTHER HEALTH AGENCIES

HSCL nurses recommend, initiate, and coordinate referrals to other appropriate health agencies including other generic services offered in home health. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- home care nursing
- physiotherapy and occupational therapy
- speech and language therapy
- long-term care
- palliative care
- geriatric assessment teams

Other professional supports that include specialization in complex seating and dysphagia services are also available. These services augment core services that exist in the community.

Once referrals are made, the ongoing participation of HSCL nurses ensures the smooth coordination of services, the maintenance of communication between key players, the support of care providers, and the joint evaluation of outcomes.

Feeding and gastro-intestinal disorders are fairly common in individuals with developmental disabilities, presenting multiple implications for community care. Resources for dietetic services may not be available in many parts of BC. HSCL nurses assist by investing time and resources in monitoring individuals' nutritional health, thus filling in existing gaps in services, whenever possible.

nutritionist

Home sharing providers can talk to the HSCL nurse about support for special diets and nutritional needs. Nutritionists and dieticians can assist with planning meals and specialized diets and help home sharing providers with other dietary concerns. These services are available in most communities in BC.

dental hygienist

Through local dental health programs, dental hygienists also work with the HSCL program to provide support, education and resources to adults with developmental disabilities and their caregivers. The hygienist can teach mouth care as well as create oral care plans for individuals based on their unique needs.

occupational/physical therapist

The HSCL nurse will provide advice on how to access therapy services should an individual need an assessment, specialized accommodations, or help with physiotherapy exercises, wheelchair positions, etc.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Specific contact information is available through the various regional health authorities. Visit the general Ministry of Health website for details at:

<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/socsec/contacts.html>.

Resources

INDUSTRY CANADA COMMUNITY ACCESS PROGRAM

Accessing the internet is quickly becoming essential for those working within the community living field and for those needing public assistance to live full lives. However, maintaining a computer that has internet access is not always a viable option for people. Fortunately, there is a solution and people that can help.

FREE OR LOW-COST INTERNET ACCESS

Industry Canada's Community Access Program (CAP) gives thousands of Canadians affordable access to the internet in places like schools, community centres, and libraries. It provides access to those people who might not have computers in their homes or workplaces.

There are approximately 530 sites in British Columbia alone and all of them have people on-site who know how to use the internet and who are eager to show you around.

CONTACT INFORMATION

phone: 250-363-0403
toll free: 1-800-268-6608
fax: 250-363-0208

Mailing Address:

Regional Manager
Industry Canada
#318 – 816 Government Street
Victoria, BC
V8W 1W9

For more information about the Community Access Program that is offered by Industry Canada, or to find a site in your local community, visit their website at:

<http://cap.ic.gc.ca/pub/>.

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC GUARDIAN AND TRUSTEE

The Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee (OPGT) mandate is to serve the following groups:

- children and youth under the age of 19 by protecting their legal and financial interests
- adults who require assistance in decision-making through protection of their legal rights, financial interests and personal care interests
- heirs and beneficiaries of deceased persons when there is no one willing or able to administer their estates, the estates of missing persons, and the beneficiaries of personal trusts

As a result of obligations created by statutory law, the OPGT exercises power resembling those of a court of law or judge in specific situations. In addition, the OPGT provides the court with reliable and independent advice when the property or financial interests of minors, adults with legal disabilities, or estates, are at risk. In carrying out its client decision-making responsibilities, the PGT is independent of government.

FINANCIAL AND PERSONAL CARE SERVICES FOR ADULTS

The Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee (OPGT) provides a range of services to adults who may need help managing their affairs as well as to their families, legal representatives, the courts and the general public.

Services to adults fall into the following areas:

- assessments and investigations (abuse and neglect)
- health care decision-making
- financial and personal care management
- review and monitoring of private committees
- other protective services

PUBLICATIONS

In addition to the services noted above, the OPGT has produced numerous pamphlets, brochures, and articles that have relevant information for individuals with a developmental disability.

The following are some of the topics that are covered:

- services to adults
- adult guardianship
- estate and personal trusts services

These can be viewed online and/or downloaded and printed. The files are regularly updated and are free of charge.

Resources

CONTACT INFORMATION

phone: 604-660-4444
fax: 604-660-0374
e-mail: mail@trustee.bc.ca

You may also reach the OPGT by phoning Enquiry BC and asking to be transferred to the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee. If calling Enquiry BC from Vancouver, please use 604-660-2421. If calling from Victoria, please use 250-387-6121. All other areas of BC, please use 1-800-663-7867.

Mailing Address:

Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia
#700 – 808 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, BC
V6C 3L3

For more information about the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee, visit their website at:

www.trustee.bc.ca.

PLANNED LIFETIME ADVOCACY NETWORK

For those who have a relative with a disability, one of the most pressing questions they face is: “What will happen to my family member when I die?” The Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network (PLAN) was created to help families answer this question. They do this by helping create a plan for the future that provides for the safety, security and well-being of a loved one — a plan that ensures the individual will not only have access to the programs and services they need, but that they will be surrounded by a loving and caring network of friends.

PLAN's work enhances the quality of life and security of individuals with a disability by building a safety net of programs that can withstand the death of their parents as well as changes in government-funded support services.

SUPPORTS OFFERED BY PLAN:

PLAN offers support to families in planning for a good life and to secure the future of their relative.

- consultation and support
- telephone coaching
- personal plan (PATH) development
- information and resources

SERVICES AVAILABLE THROUGH PLAN:

The following services offer a holistic approach to planning:

- help to develop a personal future plan for a loved one who has a disability
- help to establish a loving and caring personal network for an individual
- provide advice and referral on alternatives to the current government administered social services
- monitoring the quality of programs and services an individual receives for the rest of his or her life
- providing recommendations and advice on home ownership and alternatives to legal guardianship
- advocating on behalf of people with disabilities to government and non-government agencies
- encourage law and policy reform to remove barriers that deter families from assisting their relatives with disabilities and to create tools and mechanisms to help families secure a good life for their relatives with disabilities, both now and in the future
- increasing community awareness of the contributions people with disabilities make.

Resources

CONTACT INFORMATION

Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network
#260 – 3665 Kingsway
Vancouver, BC
V5R 5W2

phone: 604-439-9566
fax: 604-439-7001
e-mail: inquiries@plan.ca
internet: www.plan.ca

PLAN Okanagan
1650 Bernard Avenue
Kelowna, BC
V1Y 6R9

phone: 250-860-2080
fax: 250-860-2080
e-mail: ed@planok.ca
internet: www.planok.ca

REPRESENTATION AGREEMENT RESOURCE CENTRE

The Representation Agreement Resource Centre (RARC) is a non-government, charitable society. It is volunteer-driven, supported by the organizations and individuals who were involved for up to 10 years in bringing about reform of adult guardianship legislation. The RARC was incorporated in 1995 and hired its first staff in February 2000.

The RARC provides information and facilitation. It does not offer legal advice.

The Resource Centre also operates the Nidus eRegistry. Nidus is an on-line, centralized registry for enduring powers of attorney and representation agreements. It is private and secure.

RARC activities:

- presentations for groups
- publications
- training for community and professionals

INFORMATION, PUBLICATIONS AND LEGISLATION

The RARC has produced numerous publications that are of interest to individuals with a developmental disability. These can be viewed online and/or downloaded and printed. The files are regularly updated and are free of charge. These cover a wide variety of topics including the following:

- What is a representation agreement?
- What is a power of attorney?
- Where does my living will fit?
- What does the law say about capability?
- What is committeehip (legal guardianship)?
- What is the role of the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee?
- What is the Nidus eRegistry?
- How do I cancel or change an existing legal plan?
- Where do I get the representation agreement form?

It also provides information about the responsibilities of a representative, monitor, and attorney under a power of attorney.

CONTACT INFORMATION

phone: 604-408-7414
fax: 604-801-5506
e-mail: info@rarc.ca

Mailing Address:

RARC and Nidus eRegistry
411 Dunsmuir Street
Vancouver, BC V6B 1X4

For more information about the RARC and the Nidus eRegistry, visit their website at:

www.rarc.ca.

Resources

Contact Us

Phone: 604-664-0101
Toll Free: 1-877-660-2522
Fax: 604-664-0765

Aiport Square
7th Floor — 1200 West 73rd Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6P 6G5



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