

Thousands of families across B.C. are affected by Alzheimer's disease or other dementias, and this number is growing. Dementia is a progressive disease which will eventually impact most aspects of daily living, meaning people living with dementia at home will likely require assistance and support with daily tasks as they progress along the journey.

What is home support?

Home support aims to help people living with dementia to stay in their own homes as long as possible and provide respite for caregivers. Home support provides assistance with activities of daily living including but not limited to: getting in and out of bed, dressing and grooming as well as bathing. Home support can be provided as a short-term intervention or on a long-term basis for individuals who require regular, ongoing support. A health-care provider will work closely with you to understand what support is best suited to your needs.



To be eligible for home support, you must:

- Be a Canadian citizen, permanent resident or have a temporary residence permit.
- Be a resident of B.C. for at least three months.
- Have a health condition that impacts your ability to function or requires care, including end-of-life care.
- Have been assessed as requiring personal assistance and/or respite for caregiver through clinical assessment by a clinician AND have agreed to pay the client rate (if any).

Covering the cost of home care

Generally, short-term home support is free of charge up to three weeks. After that, fees are calculated based on your income through a financial assessment, which will help determine your client rate. Assessment is conducted by a health-care provider through the Home & Community Care office to determine whether long-term support is needed. It is important for advocates to keep case managers up to date, especially if the person living with dementia's needs change. Alternatively, private home support can be organized independently at an additional cost.

Occasionally, costs may be covered by the Insurance Corporation of BC (ICBC), WorkSafeBC, Veterans Affairs Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, First Nations Inuit Health Branch or other alternate payers. You may also apply for a temporary reduction in client rate to provide relief from financial hardship. Inquire with your local health authority for more information.

Care assessments

The first step to getting home support is to get in touch with the Home & Community Care office of your local health authority. Regional offices are listed [here](#). If you or your family member meets the criteria above for home support, staff will schedule a care assessment. During this process, a health-care provider will work closely with you to develop a care plan that meets your needs and calculate the costs (if any) for certain services. The care plan will be updated as your needs change. Everyone assigned to provide care (e.g. nurse, home support worker etc.) will follow the care plan to ensure you receive the care that meets your needs.

The assessment will also determine whether a case manager is needed to provide enhanced care coordination services. If you are not eligible for home support, you may be directed to other community resources that can meet your needs.

Included services

- Home support can provide support in the following areas:
- Bathing, dressing and grooming
- Special exercises, medication administration and other care needs
- Support and relief for your primary caregiver

Services do not include personal shopping and errands, extensive cooking and cleaning, banking or handling your money, companionship, driving to appointments and services that involve heavy lifting. Ask about any specific services you require when you call the Home & Community Care office as services provided can differ between health authorities.

What do I do if there is an issue?

If a situation arises in which you have any questions or concerns, contact your case manager or their supervisor. It is recommended that you speak about these concerns sooner, rather than later, to ensure your needs are addressed in a timely manner. If you are unsatisfied with how your situation is handled, you can contact the [Patient Care Quality Office](#) in your local health authority to file an official complaint. **See our advocacy resources at alzbc.org/advocacy for further information.**

What does a case manager do?

The Home & Community Care office will connect you with a case manager if they believe it is needed. A case manager assesses your needs and develops a care plan that connects you to the available resources you require. Before calling the office, ensure you have the following information ready:

- Your B.C. Care Card or B.C. Services Card
- The name and phone number of your doctor or any other doctor(s) you have visited
- The name and address of a close relative or friend
- Any prescription or other medication you're taking
- Income information and pension cheque stubs
- Your most recent income tax return or notice of assessment

If you have questions about Alzheimer's disease or other dementias, call the Alzheimer Society of B.C.'s First Link[®] Dementia Helpline for information and support (toll-free):



- **English:** 1-800-936-6033 (Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.)
- **Cantonese and Mandarin:** 1-833-674-5007 (Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.)
- **Punjabi:** 1-833-674-5003 (Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.)