

Visiting in long-term care during COVID-19

After the visit

Adjusting to the changes to visitation

Give yourself time. Acceptance does not come overnight, nor does it persist each day. There may be times when you find it difficult to accept this new reality and limits to how and when you can visit your family member. Other times, it may come more easily.

While we cannot change the restrictions around physical distancing, we can learn how to adapt the way we visit. Recognize that you are doing the best that you can considering impossible circumstances. It will take some time to adjust and to figure out new routines. Keep in mind that the Ministry of Health will continue to reassess visiting guidelines as the COVID-19 situation evolves.

What can I do if I am unable to visit my family member?

It is hard when the restrictions have been eased in long-term care, but you are still unable to visit your family member. For some families, the new visitation guidelines may mean a reduction in the frequency of visits with their person, if virtual or window visits had previously been coordinated.

The decision as to which family member is the one person allowed to visit the person in care may stir up a variety of feelings for you and your family. It is normal to feel sad or angry at the situation, and to grieve the loss of your time with the person in care.

- Ask your visiting family member to take photos or a short video of their time with the person in care so you can see for yourself how they are doing.



- If allowed by the care home, ask the visiting family member to bring photos or videos of yourself to share with the person.
- Consider having the visiting family member facilitate a video call with the person in care. Try to keep an open mind, even if you have been unsuccessful in the past when video calling with your family member. You may find that, by having somebody who is close to the person living with dementia, the call has a more successful outcome.
- Remember that care homes have to take a cautious and phased approach to opening to visitors, and that these precautions are in place to protect the health and safety of all staff and residents .

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What to do if you are concerned with what you observe in your visit

- If you observe changes in the person's care plan (for example, medication, restraint use, etc.) or are concerned with what you observe during your visit, you should request a meeting to discuss these changes with the care team. Do your best to write down your observations and

concerns before the meeting so the focus can be kept on the facts rather than assumptions. Keep in mind that this time has been challenging for care staff as well.

- While urgent decisions may have been made by the care team over the past few months, you are entitled to be involved in these decisions going forward if you are a substitute decision-maker.

Additional resource:

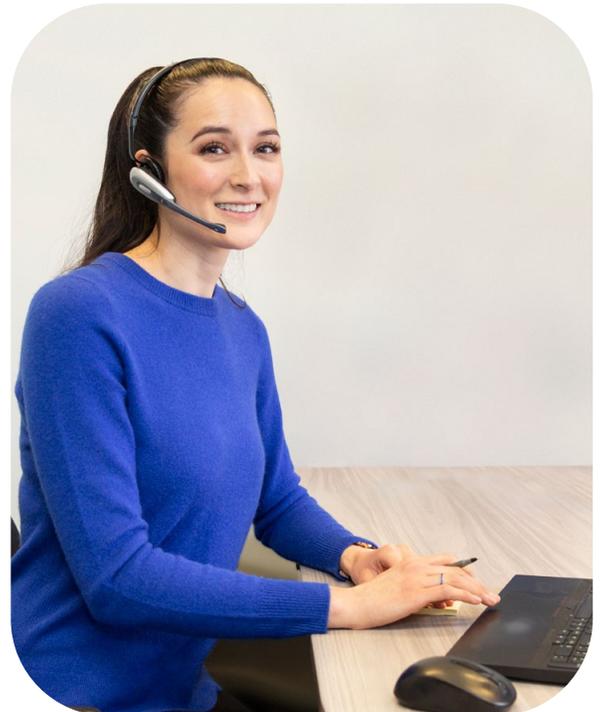
SafeCare BC and Family Caregivers of BC free, online educational program: "[COVID-19: Social visitation essentials.](#)"

Alzheimer Society of B.C. resources

The First Link® Dementia Helpline is for anyone affected by dementia, whether professionally or personally. Helpline staff and volunteers give people the support they need, when they need it.

- 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.)

For further information and support, visit the Alzheimer Society of B.C. website: alzbc.org



We want to hear from you

How did your first visit go? Were you surprised by anything? Do you have any tips to share with other visitors? Are there any concerns that were not addressed? Share your stories, ideas or concerns with us by e-mailing advocacy@alzheimercbc.org.