

## Preparing for Long Term Care By: Denise Ansell, Client Support Coordinator

Getting prepared for the move of a loved one to a Long Term Care Home can be a stressful and overwhelming time. It is important to remember that each person will handle this situation differently.

### REMEMBER...

- Your fears and concerns about moving your loved one to Long Term Care are completely normal. Guilt is a very common emotion experienced by individuals who are faced with this reality.
- A person with dementia's abilities will decline to the point when caring at home is no longer an option. Full time care will be necessary and Long Term Care is the most common option. Have the conversation about Long Term Care while the person is able so that you can understand their wishes and take steps to alleviate their fears.
- Once the person has moved it will take some time for them to adjust. Provide support and understanding. Work with the staff at the Long Term Care Home. Provide information about your loved ones routine, personality, likes and dislikes. The staff wants to assist with the transition, talk to them about your concerns and make suggestions.

*You have completed the application for admission to Long Term Care with the Community Care Access Centre and now you wait. The time between the application for and the admission to Long Term Care can be lengthy. Preparation during this time period can assist in stress reduction for yourself and your family. Some things that you may want to consider during this period of time are;*

- **Complete a written life story**- this is helpful for the staff at the long term care home. It will assist them in getting to know your loved one. You can utilize the "All About Me" book from the Alzheimer Society to get started.
- **Build a support circle**-speak to others who have a family member in long term care. They understand what you are experiencing and can share experiences they have had with the long term care environment. Talk to you Client Support Coordinator at the Alzheimer Society.
- **Get to know the long term care homes you have selected**-it is often possible to visit the long term care home. If the home provides respite care, arrange for your loved one to have a respite stay. Ask for copies of the activity calendar, floor plan as well as the menus.

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- **Complete and gather important documents**-ensure you have a copy of the appropriate documentation prepared in advanced as there will be only a short period between the bed offer and the date of admission.

*The Community Care Access Centre has called to offer a bed in a long term care home. You now have 24 hours to decide if you want to accept the bed. Once accepted the expectation is that the move will occur the next day. If you need more time, you can arrange to hold the bed for up to 5 days if you pay a fee. Now you must arrange transportation for moving day and ensure you have someone go with you when you complete the move. This is a very stressful day and having the support of a family member or friend is beneficial. If that is not possible and you require support, contact your Client Support Coordinator at the Alzheimer Society.*

*Things to bring on moving day:*

1. A list of items you are bringing into the home
2. Copies of legal and financial documents
3. All About Me book
4. Current medications
5. Personal items that have meaning (favorite quilt, pillow, photos, etc.)