



Ontario  
Health atHome

# GUIDE TO PLACEMENT IN LONG-TERM CARE HOMES



Toll Free: 310-2222 [www.ontariohealthathome.ca](http://www.ontariohealthathome.ca)

## WHAT IS A LONG-TERM CARE HOME?

A long-term care home is a place for you to live safely, comfortably and with dignity when it becomes too difficult to live at home independently. Long-term care homes are sometimes referred to as nursing homes.

A long-term care home provides:

- On-site nursing care 24 hours a day
- Access to primary care through the long-term care medical team
- All meals (including medically-based restrictions)
- Daily assistance with personal care – for example bathing, dressing and eating
- Accommodation with basic furnishings including a bed, chair and bed linens
- Laundry and housekeeping services
- Religious and spiritual services
- Personal hygiene supplies
- Pharmacy services and nursing assistance to manage your medications and clinical supplies
- Social and recreational programs
- A safe and secure environment
- Some long-term care homes also provide short-stay bed options such as respite and convalescent care
- Social work services
- Therapy services

Ontario Health atHome is responsible for placement coordination to long-term care homes. All long-term care homes have Residents' Councils and many also have Family Councils. Both play a role in services provided in homes and improving quality of life for residents, such as answering your questions and helping you and your loved ones as you adjust to your new surroundings. Long-term care homes are licensed by the Government of Ontario and must meet the requirements under the *Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021*.

## HOW DO I KNOW WHEN IT'S TIME TO APPLY FOR LONG-TERM CARE?

Changes and transitions are part of every stage and age of life. There may come a time when you wish to consider a long-term care home for the next phase in your life. You may begin to explore long-term care as an option when you:

- feel your care needs exceed what other services in the community can provide
- need help with day-to-day tasks, such as eating, bathing and dressing
- need on-site monitoring for your safety and well-being
- are unable to return home after a stay in the hospital
- need nursing care available on-site 24 hours a day



## WHERE DO I START?

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Whether you are interested in long-term care for yourself, a family member or friend, the caring and knowledgeable professionals at Ontario Health atHome will support you throughout your decision-making process. An Ontario Health atHome care coordinator will work with you to:

- Assess if you are eligible for home care services and, if you are eligible, develop a customized care plan that meets your needs and helps you to remain supported at home as long as possible.
- Explore other housing options such as:
  - supportive housing and assisted living services for seniors who may require more frequent services than home care can provide
  - retirement homes, which are privately-owned and operated facilities suitable for seniors who require minimal health care assistance
- Assess your needs whether you are at home, elsewhere in the community, or in the hospital, and determine your eligibility for admission into a long-term care home
- Help you make an informed decision and work with you, your family/caregiver to complete your application to long-term care homes, ensuring any preferences relating to admission, based on ethnic, religious, spiritual, linguistic, familial and cultural factors are considered

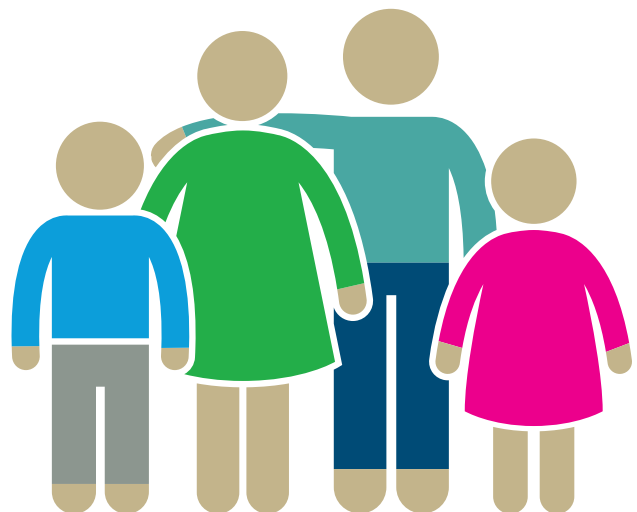
The decision to apply for long-term care is yours. You may have many questions and mixed emotions. It may be helpful to share your feelings with people you trust, including your friends, family, doctor or religious/spiritual leader.



## HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

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Once you are admitted to a long-term care home, you are required to contribute to the cost of your stay. The Ministry of Long-Term Care publishes accommodation costs for all long-term care homes at [Ontario.ca/LongTermCare](https://ontario.ca/LongTermCare) and you may qualify for financial assistance to help offset these fees. You can speak with your care coordinator for more information on costs.



## HOW DO I APPLY TO A LONG-TERM CARE HOME?



### 1. Referral

You can work with a care coordinator to determine whether you are eligible for admission to a long-term care home and to identify homes appropriate for you. You can refer yourself or a referral can be made for you by a family member/caregiver, physician, nurse or community worker. If a person is not capable of making an informed decision about long-term care, the substitute decision-maker (for example, the person who holds a Power of Attorney for Personal Care or certain family members) may do so on their behalf. It is a good idea to talk openly and respectfully with the person who might need long-term care before applying.



## 2. Visit the homes you would like to consider



Visiting homes or learning more about your top choices by visiting [Ontario.ca/LongTermCare](https://Ontario.ca/LongTermCare) will help answer some of your questions. By taking a tour, you can get a better feel for the surroundings and the people who work and live in the home.

When you visit a long-term care home, you may want to ask:

- for an information package on the home
- for copies of recent inspection reports – the province conducts regular inspections, as required under the Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021. You can also find the reports online at [publicreporting.ltchomes.net](https://publicreporting.ltchomes.net)
- to speak to a member of the home's Residents' Council
- to speak to a member of the home's Family Council, if available



Before touring the long-term care homes you are considering, list the features that are important to you and pre-book the visit so that you will be able to get an informative tour. Some things to consider for your list:

- **Location:** Is the home close enough for family and friends to visit?
- **Cultural/language/religious preferences:** Do these factors need to be considered?
- **Types of programs/activities offered:** What types of programs/activities (for example, social events or outings) does the home offer its residents?
- **Past affiliation:** Do you prefer a specific long-term care home due to current or past involvement (for example, as a volunteer, board member or friend/family of a resident)?
- **Type of accommodation:** What type of room is best suited for your needs? Options include a private room, semi-private room or basic room. Please ask your tour guide about room set-ups (for example, sharing bathrooms, sharing rooms, personalizing your room with artwork) and the standard provincial fees associated with each option, as well as financial assistance options for basic accommodation.
- **Additional needs:** Throughout Ontario, there are some beds available for veterans and for those with religious, cultural or language preferences. Your care coordinator will help you identify whether there are homes in your area that address your specific needs and whether you meet the requirements for admission.

More information and resources, including a checklist for visiting a long-term care home, are available at [Ontario.ca/LongTermCare](https://Ontario.ca/LongTermCare).

### 3. Assessments and forms



- When you decide that long-term care is right for you, you can work with your care coordinator to begin the application process.
- The decision to seek admission to a long-term care home requires the voluntary and informed consent of a capable person. An evaluation may be required if there is any doubt about the applicant's ability to make informed decisions or the need for a substitute decision-maker. Your care coordinator can provide more information on this process.
- You will be asked to complete several forms as part of the application process. You or your substitute decision-maker must give consent to apply for and be admitted to a long-term care home.
- As part of the application process, your care coordinator completes assessments to determine whether you are eligible for admission, including whether your care needs can be met in a long-term care home.
- If you are found to be eligible, **you may select homes anywhere in Ontario**. Ontario Health atHome can place you on a maximum of five waiting lists. (This maximum does not apply to people who are assessed as needing an immediate long-stay admission because of a crisis in their condition or circumstances.)



#### What if I AM NOT ELIGIBLE for long-term care?

If you are not eligible for admission to a long-term care home, your care coordinator will explain why and will help you find alternatives to meet your needs. They will connect you with community services that are right for you, such as meal services, friendly visiting and adult day programs, to help you to stay home longer than you thought possible.

If you learn you are not eligible for long-term care and you disagree with the determination, we encourage you to contact your care coordinator to discuss your current situation. Your care coordinator will work with you, your family or your caregiver to respond to your concerns.

#### What happens if I AM ELIGIBLE for long-term care?

Your care coordinator will notify you that you are eligible for long-term care and will send your application to the home(s) you selected. Each long-term care home will review your application to determine if the home can meet your needs. If a home is not able to meet your needs, your application may be declined. If this occurs, your care coordinator will provide you with more information and discuss alternate options.

## 4. Wait lists and wait times



Before you can move into one of the long-term care homes you have selected, you will likely need to wait until an appropriate bed for your care needs becomes available. Waiting time can vary depending on the type of accommodation you are waiting for and your specific care needs.

We know that waiting can be stressful for you and your caregivers. During this time, your care coordinator will continue to work with you to ensure your needs are being met until a long-term care bed becomes available.

If you have been on the waiting list for a while, your care coordinator may need to reassess you to see if there have been any changes in your condition or circumstances.

Your care coordinator can provide more information on the current wait times for the homes you are considering.

### Waiting at home

If you are living at home while you wait and urgently require support, you or your caregiver may be asked to consider long-term care homes with shorter wait times so that you can receive the care you need sooner.

If you move into a long-term care home with a shorter wait list, you can remain on the wait list for a different home of your choice and move to your preferred home when a bed becomes available.

### Waiting in hospital

The ideal place to assess your long-term care needs and develop the best possible immediate and longer-term care plan for you is in your home where your day-to-day needs can best be evaluated and understood. If you are in hospital while you wait, you or your substitute decision maker will be supported to review your long-term care home choices to select homes with shorter wait times so that you can receive the care you need sooner, with consideration of your individual cultural, familial and linguistic preferences.

With the passing of *Bill 7, More Beds, Better Care Act, 2022*, the *Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021* was amended to enable the transition of eligible hospital patients who no longer require treatment

in hospitals to care arrangements in long-term care homes, so that you can receive the right care in the right place. The amendments allow placement coordinators to carry out certain steps in the long-term care eligibility determination and admission process without the consent of a hospital patient or their substitute decision-maker. However, the amendments do not allow for a hospital patient to be physically transferred to a long-term care home without their consent if they refuse to go to a long-term care home. Your care coordinator will work with you to support your move as quickly as possible into a long-term care home that can meet your care needs while you wait for your chosen home. When a hospital patient moves to a care arrangement in a long-term care home chosen by a placement coordinator, they would be placed in priority status on the waitlist for their preferred homes.

Patients who require chronic care and are more or less permanently residing in hospital may be required to pay a chronic care co-payment. The maximum co-payment is \$63.73 per day and represents a contribution to the cost of accommodation and meals. Effective November 20, 2022, patients who have been discharged from hospital but choose to remain in hospital will be charged a standardized daily fee of \$400.

## 5. Bed offer



Your care coordinator will contact you when an appropriate bed becomes available in one of your chosen homes. You must make the decision to accept or refuse the bed within 24 hours of receiving the offer. During this time, you can speak with your family or caregivers about this decision.

### a) Accepting a bed offer

If you choose to accept the bed offer, you are required to move in within five (5) days of acceptance. Due to high demands for long-term care homes, the ministry cannot hold “vacant” beds. Regardless of when you move in, you will be required to pay the pro-rated accommodation cost for each of the five (5) days. If the bed that is offered to you is not your first choice, you may also choose to keep your name on the waiting list(s) for your other choice(s). Please note that your priority on the waiting list of your other choices may change when you accept a bed offer.

### b) Refusing a bed offer when waiting at home

If you decide to refuse a bed offer, your file will be closed and you will be removed from the waiting list of all your chosen homes. You will not be able to reapply until 12 weeks after the day you were removed from the waiting list. Exceptions are made when there is a change in your condition or circumstances. There are limited exceptions to this rule; you will want to discuss this with your care coordinator.

### c) Refusing a bed offer when waiting in hospital

If you decline a bed offer from a long-term care home while waiting in hospital, you will continue to remain on the waitlist for the long-term care homes you and the placement coordinator have selected. Regardless of whether the home was selected by you or the placement coordinator, the hospital discharge team will be informed if you decline a bed offer. Hospitals will charge you a rate of \$400 per day if you no longer require acute medical care and have received an offer for a bed in long-term care but choose to remain in hospital, after being discharged, while waiting for a setting that best meets your care needs.

## 6. Admission Day



On moving day, getting to the long-term care home and any moving costs and arrangements will be your responsibility.

On the day of admission, take things that you will need immediately. The rest of your clothes and non-essential items can be brought once you have settled in.

- **Medication:** The homes prefer you bring a Medication Administration Record or a list of current medications from your local pharmacy. However, if you are unable to obtain the list from your pharmacy, bring the prescription bottles, including over-the-counter medicine, in the original labeled containers
- **Ontario Health Card:** Remember to bring your Ontario Health Card as well as any medical insurance coverage information
- **Clothes:** Nightwear, socks, panty hose, undergarments, including support or compression garments, dresses, pants, tops, shirts and sweaters. All clothes should be machine-washable and clearly labelled with your name. Jogging suits are warm, easy to care for and stand up to many washings. Most long-term care homes do not arrange for dry cleaning

- **Assistive Devices:** Wheelchairs, walkers and braces. Please label all assistive devices before taking them to the long-term care home
- **Toiletries:** Hairbrush, comb, deodorant, shampoo, toothbrush, razor, etc.
- **Glasses, Dentures and Hearing Aids with Extra Batteries:** If possible, engrave your first initial and last name on all glasses, dentures and hearing aids
- **Personal Items:** You may wish to bring pictures and familiar articles, such as a favourite blanket or bedspread, to personalize your room. Please check with the long-term care home before bringing any furniture items or electrical appliances (e.g., radios or televisions). All personal items must be labeled. Earphones or a headset may be required for radios and televisions if you are sharing a room.

The following items should **NOT** be taken with you:

- Large sums of money (some long-term care homes may offer banking services)
- Precious jewelry, figurines, artwork and family heirlooms
- Food that is not kept in closed containers
- Sharp objects such as scissors

### Who can I talk to if I have questions or concerns after my move?

Moves are always difficult and require a period of adjustment. No place will be like your own home, therefore some compromise will be necessary. However, it can also be a time of new beginnings, new friends and new interests. Take some time before your move to work with your care coordinator or other members of your health care team to develop a plan in advance to adjust to your new surroundings and new people.

If a problem arises, it is best if you and/or your family/caregiver discuss it with the local Residents' Council or the long-term care home staff as soon as possible. Hopefully, together you can find a solution. If you still have a concern, please contact an Ontario Health atHome Care Coordinator who will connect you to a Compliance Duty Inspector at the Ministry of Long-Term Care. You can also contact the Long-Term Care Family Support and Action Line at 1-866-434-0144.

## QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

If you have questions about the application process or placement into long-term care homes, contact Ontario Health atHome at:

**310-2222**

(note that this number does not require an area code and will automatically connect you with your closest Ontario Health atHome branch)

Call the Long-Term Care Family Support and Action Line at

**1-866-434-0144**

to voice any concerns you have about a long-term care home or Ontario Health atHome

The provincial government offers comprehensive information about long-term care at [Ontario.ca/LongTermCare](https://ontario.ca/LongTermCare)

For more information on the laws that govern long-term care homes, visit [ontario.ca/laws/statute/21f39](https://ontario.ca/laws/statute/21f39)

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# Exceptional care – wherever you call home.

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Ontario Health atHome coordinates in-home and community-based care for thousands of patients across the province every day.

For information and referrals related to home and community care or to learn more about long-term care home placement services, please call 310-2222. No area code is required.

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[www.ontariohealthathome.ca](http://www.ontariohealthathome.ca)