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Welcome to St. Joseph’s Home!

We know that you and your family likely have many questions about your stay at St. Joseph’s Home. Your well-being is our top priority, and your care team is committed to providing you with excellent care.

This handbook is designed to acquaint you and your family with St. Joseph’s Home and your support team. If you require any further information, our staff are always available to help.

History
St. Joseph’s Home was established by the Carmelite Sisters in 1951 to provide care for seniors in the Medicine Hat community. Under their guidance, St. Joseph’s Home became a highly respected seniors’ care provider.

In 2011 St. Joseph’s Home became part of the Covenant Health family. Covenant Health is Canada’s largest Catholic healthcare provider, serving 12 communities across Alberta. Our facilities provide a range of healthcare services, including acute care, continuing care, assisted living, hospice, rehabilitation and respite care and seniors’ housing. Serving people of all faiths, cultures and circumstances, Covenant Health builds on a 150-year legacy of providing compassionate, quality care in Alberta.

Today St. Joseph’s Home offers the following services to the Medicine Hat community:
- Carmel Hospice (palliative care)
- Community support beds
- Respite care
- Seniors’ lodge

Our care programs

Carmel Hospice
Palliative care aims to provide care for people living with a terminal illness. Care is focused on achieving comfort, ensuring respect for the person nearing death and maximizing quality of life for the patient and loved ones.

Our dedicated and specialized team emphasizes comfort care, such as pain control rather than care aimed at curing illness. Easing the physical, emotional and spiritual pain that often accompanies life-limiting illness is a key aspect of care at the Carmel Hospice.
Community support beds
In partnership with Alberta Health Services, St. Joseph’s Home offers convalescence and palliation care to the Medicine Hat community.

This program is for patients who don’t require acute care or hospitalization but need more support than can be given at their own homes. Patient stays are up to two months.

Respite care
Respite care offers occasional relief to families and caregivers by providing short-term care to individuals with medical needs.

For a maximum of 14 days, families can arrange to have their loved ones cared for through the respite care program. There is a daily subsidized charge, set by Alberta Health Services. Clients provide their own medication and care supplies.

We are proud to serve people of all faiths, cultures and circumstances.
Mission, vision & values

Covenant Health
Covenant Health is Canada’s largest Catholic healthcare organization, with nearly 15,000 physicians, employees and volunteers serving in 12 communities across the province. As a major provider in Alberta’s integrated health system, Covenant Health works with Alberta Health Services and community partners to positively influence the health of Albertans through a broad range of programs and services in our hospitals, health centres and continuing care facilities.

Our philosophy of care
Compassion is at the core of how we care for those we serve. Through compassion, we foster hope and commit to serving those in our care with dignity and respect. Our belief is that providing compassionate care enables patients to be well-informed decision makers in all aspects of their treatment and care, families to participate in the care of their loved ones and staff to be fulfilled by their work.

Mission, vision & values
Rooted in a tradition that is 150 years strong, our mission is carried out by inspired men and women—staff, physicians and volunteers—of all faiths, traditions and cultures who believe in the value of compassionate, holistic care.

Our mission
We are called to continue the healing ministry of Jesus by serving with compassion, upholding the sacredness of life in all stages, and caring for the whole person—body, mind

Our vision
Inspired by our mission of service, we will be leaders and partners in transforming healthcare and creating vibrant communities of health and healing.

Our values
As a Catholic organization, we are committed to serving people of all faiths, cultures and circumstances, according to our Values: Compassion, Respect, Collaboration, Social Justice, Integrity and Stewardship.
Patient & resident rights and responsibilities

Your responsibilities

- Respect the rights and needs of other people within the facility.
- Respect the needs of the St. Joseph’s Home community as a whole.
- Respect the rights of management and staff to work in an environment that is free from harassment.
- Care for your own health and well-being as far as you are capable.
- Ensure your personal belongings comply with safety requirements and other people’s rights.

- Participate in planning your own health care and treatments.
- Abide by any mutually agreed upon course of treatment or advise the team if you choose not to follow your care plan.
- Pay all fees, including room charges and comfort expenses, as they become due.

*Patient & resident rights and responsibilities are adapted from the Advocacy Centre for the Elderly, Toronto, Ontario, April 2004.*
Your rights

- Be treated with compassion, courtesy, fairness and dignity.
- Live in an environment free of abuse and harassment.
- Live with respect for your beliefs, values, preferences and changing capacity.
- Bring photos, pictures and other keepsakes with you that make your room more comfortable and home-like.
- Live without being obliged to those providing your care and accommodation.
- Have your personal privacy acknowledged and respected.
- Have your confidentiality maintained in accordance with the law.
- Live comfortably, in a clean, safe and secure environment.
- Move freely within and outside the care centre without needless restriction.
- Raise your concerns, ask questions and participate in decision making without fear of restraint, interference, coercion, or reprisal.
- Participate in activities and organizations of your choice.
- Maintain your personal independence, which includes the responsibility for your actions and choices.
- Accept risk and not have your actions and choices restricted because they may include an element of risk.
- Continue to make and maintain control over the personal aspects of your daily life, your financial affairs and your personal possessions.
- Be able to get information about your rights, care, accommodation, and any other information that relates to you personally.
Admission

Admission & arrival
When you're admitted to St. Joseph's Home, we will discuss your care requirements with you and your family. Your care will be overseen by a physician, a community home care nurse and the care team. Your care team at St. Joseph’s Home comprises of registered nurses, licensed practical nurses and health care aids who are available to assist you and your family 24 hours a day.

The St. Joseph’s Home philosophy supports your freedom of movement in the interest of quality of life. This brings with it a risk of falls. In order to minimize the risk, please discuss any precautions specific to your care with staff. Our staff will advise the designated family contact person of any sudden change in your condition and emergencies.

Orientation
After your arrival, staff will orient you to your new home. You will be toured around your area and care staff will introduce you to the employees. It is important to meet your unit’s care manager and note contact information. Nursing staff will get to know you and your health care requirements. Your orientation will also include information about fire safety, emergency evacuations and other important safety information. If you have any questions, please ask the staff in your unit.

What to bring
When you are admitted to St. Joseph's Home, you are responsible for providing your own personal items such as clothing, toiletries and other personal items.
Clothing

When you are admitted to St. Joseph’s Home, it is best to bring comfortable clothing that you can easily put on and take off independently. We recommend you bring enough clothing for a full week.

We may ask you or your family to provide special clothing, such as those with Velcro closures, to help you maintain independence or for your comfort when dressing.

We suggest including the following items when you pack:

- Undergarments, socks, and bras, if usually worn
- A housecoat
- A pair of washable, non-slip, closed back, comfortable slippers
- Several pairs of pajamas/nighties
- Dresses, slacks, blouses or shirts (such as jogging suits or loose fitting pants)
- A couple of washable sweaters or cardigans
- Gloves, hat, scarf, coat and boots
- A pair of shoes (non-slip, comfortable, easy to get on, such as running shoes or flat walking shoes

Toiletries

You and your family are responsible for supplying and replacing your toiletry items, such as:

- Shower gel/soap
- Shampoo and conditioner
- Deodorant
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Denture cleaning materials and cup
- Body lotion
- Razor/shaver

- Brush, comb or pick
- Hair curlers or accessories
- Make-up and nail care items
- Kleenex
- Sunscreen
- Toiletry bag to hold these articles

Please write your name on all items

Personal assistive aids

If you require and possess any assistive devices to help your mobility, such as a wheelchair, walkers or dressing aids, please bring them with you. We will label your devices.

Your interdisciplinary team will assess your need for assistive devices and provide information on where you can obtain the items which are a personal expense and which items will be provided by St. Joseph’s Home. We provide and install assistive equipment such as raised toilet seats and commode chairs.

Glasses, hearing aids and dentures

Please label your glasses, hearing aids and dentures with your name. We are not responsible for the loss, misplacement or damage to your personal items.
Comfort and Convenience

Patient Room

Hospice/Palliative Care

In the Hospice Care Unit you have your own private room with a shared bathroom. Please lock the connecting door while you are using the bathroom and ensure to unlock the door when you are finished.

To display pictures of a personal nature the rooms are equipped with a picture railing.

Community Support Bed/Respite Care

In the Community Support Bed/Respite Care Unit you have your own private room.

Your Room

Personalizing your room

To support a home like feeling you are welcome to bring your own favorite small furniture pieces, e.g. chairs or tables. Please consult the nurse on duty for advice before bringing the items.

We encourage you to personalize your room by adding decorative touches, such as pictures, quilts or pillows. Please inquire before hanging anything on the walls. Please Label any special bedding with your name. Your family is responsible for laundering this extra bedding unless the site’s personal laundry services are able to accommodate the extra laundering and you are willing to pay for this service.

Rugs and mats are not permitted because they are a tripping hazard; all personal touches are subject to health and safety codes. Check with the nurse on duty if you have any questions and to make sure changes will comply with regulations.

Electrical equipment

All electrical cords and equipment must be in good condition and labelled “CSA Approved”. Maintenance staff will check all electrical items and cords for inventory and to ensure they meet safety codes.

Television

Cable television with a variety of basic channels is available to you free of charge.
Telephones
A telephone line is available in each room and can be used for free for all local calls. We ask that residents and families use a calling card or a cell phone to make long-distance calls.

To dial a number outside St. Joseph’s Home, please dial ‘9’ followed by the local phone number. The telephone number marked at the phone in your room is the number you can be reached at directly.

Computers
You are welcome to bring a computer to St. Joseph’s Home. Please ask the nurse or unit clerk for the access code to our wireless Internet.

Please note St. Joseph’s Home assumes no responsibility for lost or damaged computer equipment.

Additional charges
Patients and residents are responsible for fees for the following services that are not included in your room rate, including:

- Personal laundry
- Hair dressing services
- Eyeglasses, hearing aids, foot care and dental work
- Transportation to and from appointments

Personal laundry service and facilities
Our housekeeping department offers personal laundry service to our patients and residents upon request. Please contact the nurse on duty to ask about the associated costs and to arrange this service. Due to staff availability, we ask that you give notice in advance if possible.

Your family may also choose to take your laundry home or use the coin-operated washers and dryers in the basement laundry room.

St. Joseph’s Home is not responsible for damaged or lost clothing.

Hair dressing services
Our hair salon is located in the basement of St. Joseph’s Home and offers a variety of services.

Transportation
St. Joseph’s Home staff can help you coordinate transportation. This is subject to a fee, which is determined by the transportation service provider. If you need someone to come with you to an outside appointment, it is your or your family’s responsibility to arrange and pay for this service.
Your care team

Your interdisciplinary team

Your interdisciplinary patient care team includes professionals and support staff from a range of disciplines who use their individual expertise to help you meet identified health and care goals. The team will work with you and your family to develop your care plan.

The interdisciplinary team is coordinated by a registered nurse who is responsible for ensuring overall implementation and evaluation of care.

Patient and family

You and your family are an integral part of the interdisciplinary team. We do our best to keep you informed and we encourage your questions and comments. Your input on personal information, your priorities, and your health care goals helps the care team provide care that reflects your individual needs and preferences.

As the patient, you are the primary decision maker in your health and supportive care. If a patient is cognitively impaired, we will work with you and your support network to facilitate the appointment of a legally recognized alternate decision maker such as a family member or another individual.

Even if a patient is cognitively impaired, they may still be able to give us input on daily decisions. For more information on personal directives and guardianship, see Alberta's Personal Directive Act and Adult Guardianship and Trusteeship Act.

We believe all our patients, their families or their legally recognized alternate decision makers should be able to make informed decisions about available treatment at any time. If you decline treatment, you may be asked to sign a statement or a Managed Risk Agreement indicating the treatment declined and the physician will be notified.

Physician

St. Joseph’s Home will assign a physician to you. This physician will direct your medical care and be part of your interdisciplinary care team.
Nursing services

Our nursing staff are responsible for your daily care and provide nursing services 24 hours per day. They monitor your professional nursing needs and provide support based on your care plan. Your nurses will assess your health needs, consult with the physician as required, and work with the other team members to make sure that your care plan is followed.

Care staff will assist you with bathing, dressing, medication administration, grooming, meal time, toileting, mobility and lifts and other daily living activities. If required our care staff provides end of life care as well.

We also encourage family and significant others to assist you with daily living activities because both of you will benefit from the personal care and attention. Our staff appreciate this assistance and will provide you with any direction needed.

Our goal for nursing is the promotion of health, maintenance of self-care activities, recovery from any diseases or injuries and active compassionate care of dying persons and their families. Nursing services are individualized and are based on your unique needs. We encourage you to do as much as you can for yourself to maintain your sense of independence.

Pharmacy

All medications are ordered by the attending physician, provided by the pharmacy service, and administered by nursing staff.

If alternate therapies, such as herbal remedies, are not supplied by pharmacy, you or a family member must purchase it after you obtain a physician's order.

Please make sure the nursing staff is aware of any allergies. Medications are reviewed regularly by the pharmacist, the physician, and a nurse. The pharmacist is also available to discuss drug therapies with residents and their families as the need arises.

Please do not self-administer any (prescription or over-the-counter) medication, or herbal preparations without consent of your physician and the knowledge of your nursing staff or care team. These medications may interact with other medications that are taken or may cause harmful effects. For example, laxatives may cause diarrhea, cold remedies may increase blood pressure, and aspirin may cause stomach ulcers or bleeding problems. Even topical remedies such as A535 Rub may cause skin problems.
Physiotherapy

Physiotherapists can assess and treat your posture, balance, muscle strength, gait, endurance, pain, joint range of motion, and movement coordination. Treatment can include upper and lower limb strengthening exercises or mobilization activities to maintain strength and function. Once specific treatment areas are identified, this therapy can help you maintain or improve your abilities. Your physiotherapist will regularly evaluate your progress to make sure interventions are appropriate.

Dietary services

Upon admission, we will ask you about your dietary needs. With your help, we will identify food preferences and nutritional concerns. Special diets and texture modifications are provided to meet patient’s needs. We monitor your nutritional status on an ongoing basis and make adjustments.

Dietary services aim to provide nutrition for your health and well-being, medical nutrition intervention and additional nutrition consultation as required.

Social work services

Registered social workers may be available to assist in providing support to you and your family regarding the many changes that are impacting you at this time. They can assist in locating and arranging resources, act in an advocacy role, and assist you in getting reassessed for an alternate level of care should your needs change.

The social workers may also be available to assist you with identifying which alternate decision making option might be best for you in looking after your personal and financial matters when you are no longer able to do so.

Spiritual and religious care

We include your spiritual health in your care plan. Our goal is to support you in accordance with your faith traditions and try to accommodate your religious observances — whether Catholic, protestant, or another faith. Non-denominational pastoral services are available for individual counselling, memorial services and special seasonal services. To meet the diverse spiritual needs of those we serve, the spiritual and religious care team includes clergy from the community and trained volunteers who understand and share your spiritual beliefs.

Please watch for postings at St. Joseph’s Home for specific dates and times of worship and commemorative services.

Our chapel is located on the second floor, where patients, residents and visitors can pray or meditate at any time of the day.
Volunteer services

Our volunteers are an essential component of St. Joseph’s Home and they add to the quality of patient life by assisting in several programs for our patients. Volunteers bridge the gap between the services that professional and other employees provide, and add the little “extras” that contribute to your well-being, health, and happiness. We encourage family and friends to take part in volunteer activities.

Volunteers are required to complete an application, attend an interview, and receive an orientation and training before starting their volunteer placement. All volunteers must provide a criminal record check through the police service and sign a confidentiality agreement.

Other support services

Beyond your interdisciplinary team, you may require other support services. You or your family are responsible for arranging dental, optical, and hearing aid services. Please make sure all dentures, glasses and hearing aids are marked with the patient’s name.
Hospitality and support team
Making St. Joseph’s Home your temporary home requires more than the medical, nursing and therapeutic services. Some of our other amenities, along with our staff will help make you feel comfortable.

Food and nutrition services
Regular, well-balanced meals, which are varied, tasty, attractive, and tailored to our patient’s needs, are planned by a registered dietitian to meet Canada’s Food Guide recommendations for essential nutrients. We regularly revise the menu.

You may find that your tastes and preferences change with time, disease, medications, or special diet requirements. We cannot guarantee that every patient will be completely satisfied with every meal, but we do try to accommodate personal preferences, if possible. We also try to incorporate our patients’ cultural preferences and local foods or dishes, as much as we can.

Your friends and family are welcome to bring you favorite foods or dishes. Due to dietary regulations, please do not share your homemade food with other residents. Family members, please inform staff before giving food to a patient.

Meal times are generally at the following times:

- Breakfast: 8.00 am
- Lunch: 12.00 pm
- Dinner: 5.00 pm

The meals will be served to your room. If you wish we encourage your family to take you to the dining room located on the main level to join our residents for meals. Please inform the nursing staff in advance that this can be arranged for you. Also your family or friends are welcome to join you for a meal (at cost) with appropriate notice.

Tea and coffee will be available at all times. If you require snacks please ask staff for assistance.
Housekeeping services
St. Joseph’s Home provides housekeeping services for your room and all areas on a regular basis. We ask all patients and families to help our staff to maintain clean and tidy living areas. You are responsible for cleaning and maintaining all your personal items (such as ornaments, pictures, plants, etc). St. Joseph’s Home is not responsible for the maintenance of, damage to, or loss of personal items kept at the bedside.

Maintenance services
Maintenance staff makes sure that our equipment is kept in good condition and is checked as per regulations. Please inform the nursing staff when you discover any issues requiring maintenance service, e.g. TV outage. Our maintenance staff does not provide maintenance for the patients’ personal equipment.

If you bring in any electrical equipment, it must be checked and approved by the maintenance staff.
Creating a safe environment

Commitment to safety
During your stay at St. Joseph’s Home we want you to feel safe and comfortable. We are committed to working with you to create a safe environment where your physical, spiritual and emotional wellbeing are protected.

No matter where you live, risks are a part of everyday life and at St. Joseph’s Home we do all we can to create a safe place for our patients. Patients and families are expected to also help create this safe environment. At the same time, it is important for us to respect patient and resident rights to independence, dignity and comfort. Achieving a balance between safety and rights is our goal.

Name tags and IDs
When you are admitted to St. Joseph’s Home, you will be issued a form of identification (ID), such as an ID band. You are required to wear this ID at all times so care staff can correctly administer medication and lab tests, or in the event that a patient is missing.

While working, our staff and volunteers wear ID cards or name tags so you can easily identify them.

We ask visitors to sign a guest book upon arrival and when leaving the building.

St. Joseph’s Home security
During the late evening and at night our entrance doors are locked for security reasons.

We also have an electronic surveillance system for safety and security.

Please sign in and out when you enter and exit St. Joseph’s Home. This is required and for security in case of an emergency.
Emergency preparedness
St. Joseph’s Home has an Emergency Response Manual to deal with emergency situations such as fires and evacuations and for continuance of care during these emergencies. If you would like more information or want to see these plans, please ask our care team.

We encourage you to report any potential fire or safety hazard to our staff.

Fire drills
St. Joseph’s Home has alarm pull stations with posted instructions in strategic locations around the facility. Smoke and heat detectors will warn patients and staff in the case of a fire. St. Joseph’s Home is also protected with a sprinkler system.

You will be oriented to St. Joseph’s Home floor plan including all exits, alarm stations and extinguishers.

We will hold regular fire drills under the general supervision of a Fire Marshall. We regret any inconvenience fire drills may cause, but it is an important test so we can be sure to get all our patients to safety during an actual emergency.

During an emergency, a nurse will take charge. Please obey all orders.

Evacuation
If there is an emergency, the nurse in charge, administrator, administrator-on-call, or the fire department will determine if there is a need for evacuation. If there is an evacuation, St. Joseph’s Home staff will co-ordinate the relocation of patients and staff to a predetermined safe location. Staff will contact patient family members to inform of the evacuation and the location of the patients.

Continuation of services
St. Joseph’s Home has a Continuation of Services Plan to make sure there will be ongoing accommodation services during an unexpected emergency.
Infection control

It is important our staff, volunteers, patients, and visitors, take steps to prevent the spread of infections in our facility to protect the health of our patients and residents. There are simple things you and your family can do to reduce the spread of germs, such as:

- Wash your hands often. Hand washing is the best way to stop the spread of germs that cause infection. Most our sites have waterless hand washing stations at the entrance.

- Follow respiratory etiquette. Cover your mouth and nose with your sleeve or arm when coughing or sneezing. Put used tissues in the garbage. Wash your hands after coughing or sneezing.

- Be responsible when visiting. Please do not visit St. Joseph's Home if you are feeling ill or have felt any symptoms of vomiting, diarrhea or influenza (fever, cough, aches and pains).

Get your flu shot. We recommend family members receive a flu shot each year.

Scent fragrances

An increasing number of individuals are reporting sensitivities to various scented products (such as perfumes/colognes, hairspray, deodorants). These scented products may trigger a number of reactions including respiratory distress, headaches, nausea, and dizziness. In some individuals even the smallest amount or the mildest of scents will trigger a reaction.

We request that you and your visitors refrain from wearing scented products. This sensitivity can include flowers, so we ask that your visitors avoid bringing highly scented flowers, particularly lilies.

Smoking

All Covenant Health facilities are non-smoking environments. Patients, family members, visitors and staff are not permitted to smoke on St. Joseph’s Home property except in designated outdoor smoking areas as posted.
Guidelines and policies

Our guidelines and policies will help you feel comfortable and secure during your stay while considering the wellbeing of all our patients. Upon request guidelines and policies can be provided to you.

Ethics committee

All Covenant Health facilities have access to an Ethics Committee or consultation, which can provide support to patients, residents, their families and staff when faced with an ethical dilemma. They can also provide education and support to staff. The goal is to help our patients live and die with dignity. In health care, this specialized area of ethical decision-making is referred to as bioethics.

An Ethics Committee can include members from the spiritual care team, medical and nursing staff, residents and families, and a Covenant Health Clinical Ethics Leader. We are guided by the Mission and the Health Ethics Guide published by the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada. You can read this guide online at: http://chac.ca/resources/ethics/ethicsguide_e.php

We treat issues referred to the Ethics Committee with utmost confidentiality.

There is a protocol for steps in an ethical review. Requests may focus on patient care or on research to be conducted at the facility. The manager of the unit, often in conjunction with the physician, submits a written request for review by an Ethics Committee. The Ethics Committee will review the request, consult with stakeholders, such as patients, family, staff and physicians, and then make recommendations to the attending physician for decision.

The Ethics Committee is available to address issues and provide support to residents, patients, family members, and staff who have ethical concerns.

If you have any questions regarding the Ethics Committee or the process for ethical review, please talk to a St. Joseph’s Home administration.

Charitable or memorial donations

We gratefully accept charitable or memorial donations, which we use to improve care and service to residents. If anyone wishes to make a general or targeted donation to St. Joseph’s Home, please contact Administration for information.
Conflict of interest
To protect your privacy and financial security, our staff and volunteers are not permitted to be involved in your personal affairs such as banking, signing any document on your behalf or acting as your agent or representative. If you need help please arrange for a family member or legally recognized alternate decision maker to take care of your personal and financial affairs.

Our staff and volunteers are not able to refer you to a private service or business where they or other family members have a vested interest and they are not allowed to provide private services for residents.

Concerns resolution
It is important to us there is a confidential and timely way for you to bring up and address any concerns you may have about your health care or living conditions. If you have any concerns, take the following steps:

- Consult with the appropriate staff member at the time the issue is discovered, and
- Bring the issue to the attention of the Care Manager for resolution.

If further intervention is required:
- Consult with the Unit Manager, Site Administrator, or the Senior Director.

Our goal is to resolve issues as quickly as possible and to engage the staff directly involved.

Gifts to staff and volunteers
We are grateful when our patients and families appreciate the hard work of our volunteers and employees. Volunteers and employees are not permitted to accept individual personal gifts from patients or families. Gifts to the ‘whole team’ such as boxed chocolate or flowers may be accepted.

Monetary donations to St. Joseph’s Home will be gratefully accepted. These funds will be used for activities or equipment needed to improve the quality of life for our patients and residents. Receipts are issued for income tax purposes.

Security of valuables
Please do not keep valuables or large amounts of cash in your room. St. Joseph’s Home does not accept responsibility for these items. We recommend your family keep your valuables at their home.
Discharge/Vacating room
You may be discharged if your health improves or you require a different level of care. It is not uncommon to find that your health improves after admission because of the nursing services, rehabilitation services, adjusted medications, nutritional improvements, or a combination of all these factors. When your health status changes, you will be reassessed by a coordinator from Alberta Health Services and listed for the appropriate level of support.

If your needs can be met in a community setting, such as a group home, a family care home, or in independent living arrangements with home care, your interdisciplinary team will assist with the initial transition to ensure continuity of care.

Covenant Health retains the right to refer the patient to other facilities if we can no longer support your health care needs.

You or your family are responsible to remove your personal belongings within the time frames discussed with St. Joseph's Home staff. Any belongings you or your family leave longer than 30 days after your discharge will be donated to a community charity.
Visiting guidelines

Family members and visitors are welcome at St. Joseph’s Home. We believe that visits by family members and friends contribute greatly to the comfort of our patients. However, the welfare of the patient must always come first. At times, restrictions may be suggested to ensure best patient care.

The following guidelines will help you make your visits as pleasant as possible for all concerned.

- Mutual respect is requested between visitors, staff and residents.
- Patient’s confidentiality is respected. Therefore we ask that you do not enter certain areas where patient and resident information is kept.
- You are welcome to accompany visitors to other areas of the building; however, please be mindful of other patients and residents private space.
- If your visitors require supplies for caregiving, please obtain them from the nursing station.
- Visitors of all ages are welcome. For children’s safety, we ask that they are supervised and in the company of a responsible adult at all times.
- You are welcome and encouraged to use the outdoor areas for visits.

- Visitor are requested to refrain from visits, if they are suffering colds, flu, diarrhea, vomiting or other infections.
- Please use the hand gels when entering and leaving the facility. Hand gels are located throughout the building.
- Visitors are required to sign in and out. The binder is located on the main floor beside the main elevator.

Over night stays

St. Joseph’s Home offers one guest suite to families out of town, visiting a patient. Please check availability and associated cost with the nursing staff.

For family members of a Hospice patient, who want to stay with the patient during the night, we have cots and beddings available. Please talk to our nursing staff.
**Tips for communicating**

As people age, physical changes may affect their ability to communicate, so:

- Place yourself at eye level.
- Show respect with your words and actions.
- Be aware of changes in a resident’s mood and behavior during your visit and adjust to the resident’s needs.
- Use facial expressions and gestures to emphasize your meaning.
- If someone is hard of hearing, move close and try to speak louder without shouting.
- Be patient and give time to respond.
- If someone has difficulty remembering, offer a suggestion before answering for them.
- Confirm information from the resident with nursing or care staff. Some of our residents get confused about specific details.

Remember, the important thing is you are spending time together. You don’t have to fill every moment with conversation. Sitting quietly together is fine.

**Gift ideas**

You may want to consider different kinds of gifts than you’ve given in the past. Try to think of gifts that help make life easier, more enjoyable, or safer. Consider activities you could enjoy doing together or are part of the social life surrounding him or her. And don’t forget the gift of time is the best gift of all.

Here are some suggestions:

- Flowers (mild scent)
- Lotions and soaps (unscented)
- Large print books
- Magazine or newspaper subscriptions
- Adaptive clothing
- Slippers with good support and tread
- Large dial or amplified telephone
- Lapboard
- Rechargeable batteries and charger
- Magnifier
- Hobby supplies
- Puzzles, playing cards or games

**Pets**

Pets can be an important part of the family, and at some of our care centres you are permitted to bring pets for visits. If you would like to bring a pet for a visit, please:

- Verify that pet visits are acceptable.
- Provide proof of license and vaccinations, before the visit.
- Make sure the pet is cleaned and bathed.
- Pets should remain on a leash at all times.

During the visit, please keep the pet quiet and in control. Staff can request any uncontrolled pets be immediately removed.
Booking private function rooms
At St. Joseph’s Home, you can book private function rooms and/or catering for on-site family celebrations. Catering can include birthday cakes, full meals, tablecloths, dishes, and flatware. For more information, talk to St. Joseph’s Home Administration staff.

Resident leaves of absence
You are encouraged to maintain community and family links. Going on an outing can be a nice change of pace for residents. Staying overnight at families’ homes contribute to residents independence and holistic well-being. We encourage you to take your loved ones outside of the continuing care centre for special visits.

Day outings
Please sign out residents when you are leaving the building. If you are leaving for an extended outing, give nursing staff advance notice, if possible, so appropriate medication(s) and instructions can be prepared.

Overnight visits and vacations
You are welcome to invite your loved one home for a visit or to join you on a vacation. All we require 12 hour notice so our nursing staff can prepare necessary medications and supplies.

Medical leave
Separate from social leave, patients may be admitted into another centre or the hospital for medical care or treatment. Patients may be able to keep their room during a medical leave.

Contact person
Please provide current family contact phone numbers and addresses to the nursing staff at St. Joseph’s Home.
Legislation and provincial services

The following information was up-to-date as of printing. Go to the Government of Alberta website, www.seniors.gov.ab.ca for the latest version of these acts, contact information and further resources for seniors and their families.

My Health Alberta and Health Link Alberta
The Alberta Government and Alberta Health Services created My Health Alberta as a one-stop, trustworthy website for health information and health tools that has been developed in consultation with health professionals.

For 24-hour health information and advice, phone Health Link Alberta: 1.866.408.5465 (LINK), or go to the My Health Alberta website: www.myhealth.alberta.ca.

services could include care from nurses, therapists, health care aides and other healthcare professionals.

Audits and remedies
Health authorities regularly evaluate health care services and try to improve continuing care health services. If you have any concerns about a publicly-funded health care service that cannot be resolved with your continuing care centre, you can contact the Alberta Health Services office in your area or visit the Alberta Health website, www.health.alberta.ca, for more information.

Alberta continuing care health service standards
Alberta Health’s Continuing Care Health Service Standards outline expectations for health and personal care services provided to residents at any publicly-funded continuing care program or site. These
Supportive Living Accommodation Licensing Act
Supportive Living and Long-Term Care Accommodation Standards are defined under Alberta’s Supportive Living Accommodation Licensing Act. The standards require a safe and comfortable environment that increases the quality of life for Albertans living in supportive living accommodations and allow the province to monitor these accommodations and their services for compliance. The standards set expectations for services such as meals, building maintenance, security and housekeeping.

Audits and remedies
Alberta Health, a ministry of the Alberta government, is responsible for overseeing services in Alberta’s continuing care accommodations and services. Alberta Health monitors accommodations for compliance with Supportive Living and Long-Term Care Accommodation Standards and conducts audits to measure compliance with Continuing Care Health Standards and Infection Prevention and Control Standards at regular intervals.

If you have any concerns about your accommodations and related services that cannot be resolved with your continuing care centre, you can contact the Accommodation Standards Complaint Line: 1.888.357.9339.

Protection for Persons in Care (PPC)
Alberta’s Protection for Persons in Care Act promotes the safety and well-being of adults being cared for in all publicly-funded facilities. Anyone who has a reasonable belief that a person in care has been abused has the responsibility to report the suspected abuse by calling Alberta Supports: 1.888.357.9339. If a person’s safety is in immediate danger, call the local police service.

Ombudsman service
If you have a question or concern about the fairness of how your concern was handled by Alberta government authorities, by designated professional organizations, or through the patient concerns resolution process of Alberta Health Services, you can contact the Alberta Ombudsman: 1.888.455.2756 or www.ombudsman.ab.ca.
Privacy and health information protection

Your health information is being collected under the authority of section 20(b) of the Health Information Act. The collection of your personal health number is authorized by section 21(1) of the Health Information Act. The provisions of the Health Information Act protect the confidentiality of health information collected by Covenant Health. We will use the greatest degree of anonymity possible when we use your personal health information.

Under the Health Information Act, your continuing care centre is authorized to use your health information to:

- Determine your eligibility for health services.
- Provide you with health services.
- Carry out personal and medical care.

We may also use your health information:

- To conduct investigations, discipline proceedings, practice reviews relating to the members of a health profession or health discipline.
- To educate health services providers.
- To conduct research under conditions set by one of Covenant Health’s Ethics Committees.
- For internal management, health system management, and public health surveillance.

You have a right to request access to your own personal health information, in accordance with the fee schedule contained in the Health Information Act. If you have any questions regarding the collection and use of your personal health information, please contact your continuing care centre representative.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP)

Public bodies must comply with Alberta’s Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). This act protects your personal information by requiring organizations to obtain consent for the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information and provides you with a right of access to your own personal information. Covenant Health protects your personal information in accordance with this act.

If you have a concern about the handling of your personal information, you can contact the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for Alberta: 1.888.878.4044.
Personal Directives Act

We recommend all our patients and residents make a Personal Directive, which is a legal document that designates a decision maker (agent) and/or provides written instructions to be followed if you are no longer able to make decisions about where you will live or your medical treatment. This document is governed by the Personal Directives Act.

A pre-determined care decision, such as a Personal Directive, helps your care team act on your desires in the event of a change in your health condition or life-threatening situation where you would be unable to make your wishes known. Your care team can help you with questions about creating a Personal Directive.

If you create a Personal Directive, you can also register it with the Government of Alberta to make it easier for your care team to act on your directive and to contact your designated decision maker. You can learn more about Personal Directives and registration on the government website: [www.humanservices.alberta.ca](http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca).

Enduring Power of Attorney

Personal directives give a designated person the ability to make decisions about your health and personal care. We also recommend you create an Enduring Power of Attorney, which is a legal document that allows you to designate a person to make financial and legal decisions on your behalf. This designation transfers authority at a time you request or if you suffer a loss of capacity. You can learn more about enduring power of attorney on the government website: [www.justice.alberta.ca](http://www.justice.alberta.ca).
Adult Guardianship and Trusteeship Act
The Adult Guardianship and Trusteeship Act protects adults over the age of 18 years who are unable to make personal or financial decisions for themselves. The act gives options to vulnerable adults who may want partial or full assistance in making decisions, such as supported and co-decision making, guardianship or trusteeship.

If you do not have a personal directive or enduring power of attorney and become unable to make your own decisions, there are a number of legal options to protect your interests. You can learn more about guardianship, trusteeship, and other decision making options on the government website: www.humanservices.alberta.ca.

Office of the Public Trustee
Alberta’s Office of the Public Trustee protects the financial interests of vulnerable Albertans by administering estates of dependent adults and minors when there is no one else to act. You can contact either the office in Edmonton or Calgary by calling 310.0000 toll-free from anywhere in the province.

Office of the Public Guardian
Alberta’s Office of the Public Guardian provides decision-making mechanisms for individuals who are unable to make personal, non-financial decisions for themselves. This office is governed by the Personal Directives Act, the Adult Guardianship and Trusteeship Act and the Mental Health Act. You can contact the offices in Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge, St. Paul, Red Deer, or Grande Prairie by calling 310.0000 toll-free from anywhere in the province.