

Resident and family handbook



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Welcome to your new home!

We are pleased that you have chosen Covenant Health's staff and volunteers to provide the support you need and we hope you will feel at home here. Your health and wellbeing is our primary concern and our services are designed to work with you and your family to meet your needs.

This handbook is designed to acquaint you and your family with the services and care provided and an overview of your support team.

No handbook can answer all your questions. If you require any further information, our staff would be happy to assist you.

At Covenant Health centres, our staff and volunteers believe that our program and care must tend to the body, mind, and spirit of each resident. To do that, we understand the importance of working in partnership and we welcome your input and involvement as a full participant in assuring your wellbeing. We also welcome and encourage your family's involvement in your care planning and decision making in any way you think appropriate.

We believe that enhancing your quality of life means maximizing function, freedom, individuality, and independence as much as possible. All of our programs have been developed with care and we encourage you and your family to take advantage of them as much as possible while respecting your personal choices and preferences.

We believe in fostering positive relationships, growth and personal development for all those who live and work here. This requires open communication and empathy for those around us.

We believe that we must continually seek new knowledge and apply it to the growth and development of our programs and staff. In this context we seek to meet our residents' needs using appropriate and effective interventions based on the best information available.

We believe and share in the Christian mission of "healing the body, enriching the mind and nurturing the soul," and we believe in the value of pastoral care and the healing power of humour as daily components of our supportive environment. We believe in providing spiritual care for you in accordance with your faith traditions and try to accommodate your religious observances and faith.

Your continuing care centre is run by capable, knowledgeable staff, each of whom brings gifts to an environment of genuine resident focused teamwork. If you have questions about our services, your care, or your new home, please feel free to ask.

Covenant Health Strategic Framework *Lighting Our Way*

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 and soul.

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.

Our vision

Covenant Health will positively influence the health of Albertans and be of greater service to those in need by working together with compassion, quality and innovation.

Our strategic directions

*Live our mission and values
in all we do*

Build and engage the team

*Excel at providing quality
care and service*

Respond to those in need

Resident's rights and responsibilities

As a resident of a continuing care centre you have the responsibility to:

- Respect the rights and needs of other people within the continuing care service.
- Respect the needs of the continuing care service 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 resident's rights.
- Participate in the planning for 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.

Resident's rights and responsibilities are adapted from the Advocacy Centre for the Elderly, Toronto, Ontario, April 2004.

As a resident of a continuing care centre you have the right to:

- 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.
- Choose where you will live and to have a roommate you are compatible with (if sharing a room).
- 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

Assessment and placement

If you are interested in seeking admission to any continuing care centre in Alberta, you are assessed for placement by the Alberta Health Services Continuing Care Management Program. Alberta Health Services provides a single point of entry to continuing care whether you are in home care, acute care, or a continuing care centre. Alberta Health Services Co-ordinators help you navigate community services and resources available to you by linking you to appropriate resources. They will help you find an appropriate continuing care centre that will suit your needs and start the application and admission process. Call toll-free 1.888.943.1920 for more information. If you live in a rural area, you can also contact your local Home Care office.

If you, or a family member, are considering admission to a continuing care centre, we recommend that you tour possible sites because when a space becomes available, you have to decide quickly whether to accept the placement. Most centres offer regular group tours where you can see the continuing care centre, learn about programs, what you can expect from the centre, and what is expected of you.

Some of our centres have a resident pet for our pet therapy program. If you are allergic to animals, please check to see if your preferred continuing care centre participates in this program.

Admission preparation

When a space becomes available in a continuing care centre, a representative will contact you to offer the space and start the process of moving in. The representative will arrange the date and time and you will be asked to complete several forms and to provide other required information. You will also have the opportunity to ask any of your questions and discuss any of your concerns.

In some cases, you may meet with a care centre representative to make sure all services required will be in place when you move in. The meeting may include members of your family and other members of your support team, as required. We will discuss your general care requirements and other needs to determine if any additional support services may be required.

If the available space is not at your chosen care centre, you can remain on the wait list for that centre and a transfer will be arranged when a space becomes available. Transfer charges will be at your own cost.

Admission and arrival

Orientation

In the first six weeks after your arrival, continuing care centre staff will orientate 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 and therapists will get to know you and your health and care requirements. Your orientation will also include information about fire safety, emergency evacuations and other important safety information. If you have any questions not covered in this handbook or during your orientation, please ask the staff in your unit.

What to bring

When you move in, you are responsible for providing your own personal items such as clothing, toiletries and other personal items.

At some centres you may be required to provide your own furniture or sheets. Refer to the *Centre Profile* insert to confirm which items you will need to bring with you when you move in. You and your family are responsible for replacing and repairing any of these personal items.

Clothing

When you move in, it is best to bring comfortable clothing that you can easily put on and take off independently. Since your clothing will be machine washed and dried, it is best to bring clothing that will wear well and will not require special care or ironing. Dark colours are more prone to fading with regular washing.

At most of our continuing care centres, when you move in, all your clothes will be labelled by laundry services (if available). Whenever you get any new clothing items, please leave them with a care centre representative to be labelled before you wear them. If your family will be doing your laundry, we still recommend that you label all clothing.

When you move in, we recommend that 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. Space is often limited in your room, so you may want to bring seasonal clothing and exchange clothing as seasons change.

When you pack, you should include the suggested clothing:

- 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, 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 as to where you can obtain the items which are a personal expense and which items will be provided by the centre. Most of our centres provide and install assistive equipment such as transfer poles, toilet armrests, raised toilet seats, and commode chairs.

Powered mobility

If you own a power wheelchair or scooter and would like to use it in or outside your centre, please contact your continuing care representative to discuss the rules for use. We will inspect all power wheelchairs and scooters for safety. If you are considering purchasing a new power wheelchair or scooter, we recommend getting an assessment and driving test from an occupational therapist to see if such a device is suitable for your use and will be permitted at your centre.

Glasses, hearing aids, and dentures

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





Your new home

In Alberta, continuing care includes any health care provided to individuals who require 24-hour, round-the-clock assistance meeting their health care needs. Health Canada defines continuing care as “the range of medical and social services for individuals who do not have, or have lost some capacity for self-care and require assistance in activities of daily living.”

Levels of continuing care centres

Covenant Health offers you several options for continuing care depending on your abilities and your needs including designated supportive living, long-term care and palliative care. Each centre provides care teams who work with you to care for your everyday health, and spiritual needs in a comfortable environment. Some of our continuing care centres offer more than one level of care.

Designated supportive living

When it is no longer possible to live at home, but you still want to maintain as much independence as possible, you may want to consider a supportive living site. Supportive living balances care from nursing and support staff to help you when you need it with meals, housekeeping, laundry, and health care but allows you to take care of as many of your needs

as possible. Supportive living also provides you with a community of other residents and recreational activities in a home-like environment. You maintain your privacy, and you’ll have the security of on-site staff 24 hours a day.

Long-term care

When you require more support than our supportive living sites can provide, other sites offer long-term care. This care offers many of the benefits of supportive living like daily meals and housekeeping in a community of other seniors, and also provides more health care. Long-term care centres are more likely to have professional nursing, rehabilitation and other health care staff on-site to offer residents more direct observation and care.

Palliative care

Some of our centres also offer palliative care for our residents who have a disease or illness that cannot be cured. This care aims to make residents as comfortable as possible and ease pain and discomfort from their symptoms. Our palliative care programs provide care for people in accordance with best practice standards and reflect our ethical principles. The goal is not to hurry or postpone death but to comfort and support the resident and their family and friends through their illness with consideration for the resident's and the family's wishes.

Your room

We encourage you to make yourself comfortable and add some personal touches to make your room feel like home.

Covenant Health continuing care centres offer semi-private and private rooms. We will try to provide you with your preferred room type, and if it is not available, we will put your name on a waiting list, and you will be contacted when the requested room type becomes available.

Furnishings

Please inquire about what furnishings are included in your room because it differs at each site. Since storage space is limited, we request that less frequently used or unused items such as seasonal clothing and suitcases are stored somewhere other than at the site. Please keep drawers and closets tidy and clutter-free to avoid safety hazards.

You will usually have a light near the bed. If you would like additional lighting, please discuss it with the unit manager or nurse.

Personalizing your room

We encourage you to personalize your room by adding decorative touches such as pictures, draperies, quilts, comforters, or pillows. Please inquire before hanging anything on the walls, because there are different policies at each centre.

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.

You may bring in additional pieces of furniture if space is available. This furniture must be washable and easily movable by one person for cleaning. Please check with your Care Manager to confirm the furniture you would like to bring is permitted. If your care needs change, we may ask you to remove extra furniture to make room for additional equipment, such as a lift.

Rugs and mats are not permitted because they are a tripping hazard; all personal touches are subject to health and safety codes. Check with your continuing care staff if you have any questions and to make sure that your 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 to make sure they meet safety codes and for inventory.

Televisions

If you are bringing a TV, place it on non-slip material on a stand. Covenant Health provides basic cable TV service at cost; you are responsible for any additional cable costs. If you are in a shared room, please use headphones when you listen to your TVs or other audio devices, for the comfort of others sharing your living area.

Telephones

Many continuing care centres have public pay telephones in the common areas for your use. If you wish to have a private telephone in your room, please make arrangements with the available telephone company. You and your family are responsible for all costs associated with the telephone and for cancelling the service when it is no longer needed. Please note phone connection is not available in all rooms.

Computers

You are welcome to bring a computer in centres that have the capacity for internet/wireless access. You can store them at your bedside at your own risk and the centre assumes no responsibility for loss of or damage to computer equipment.

Fees and charges

Accommodation charges are set by the Alberta government. Talk to your continuing care centre representative to find out types of rooms and associated costs at your centre. These prices are subject to change with three months' notice. Please refer to the *Centre Profile* insert for current rates.

Additional charges

You are responsible for additional fees that are not included in your room rate, including:

- Personal laundry/labelling
- Personal toiletries
- Special recreation outings
- Eyeglasses, hearing aids, foot care, dental work
- Transportation to and from appointments
- Telephone
- Cable TV
- Internet service

Refer to the *Centre Profile* insert for the current rates. Monthly statements are mailed from the corporate or site business office. You can pay your statement at the business office of the continuing care centre, mail directly to the corporate or site business office, or by direct withdrawal from your bank account.

Trust account

If your continuing care centre uses trust accounts for small expenses, we can set up an account for you when you arrive. This account will cover incidental expenses such as hairdressing appointments, lunch outings, recreational activities, canteen purchases, and other items that you purchase. Your balance should not exceed \$500. You will receive regular trust account statements from the business office. We strongly recommend that you don't keep any cash in your room—cash kept in your room is at your own risk. Some centres have daily withdrawal limits from this account, so please talk to your continuing care centre representative for site specific information. Trust fund monies will be returned to you or your designate when you leave your continuing care centre.

At locations that do not use trust accounts, any expenses that you incur will be added to your monthly statement instead.

Your care team

Interdisciplinary assessment

Soon after your arrival and then annually, you will have an interdisciplinary assessment with your interdisciplinary team and your family.

Within six to eight weeks of your admission, the interdisciplinary team will complete an assessment of your health, develop a customized Care Plan and conduct a care conference to review your care requirements. You and your family members are encouraged to share any health information, concerns, and questions with the team and to participate in the assessment and conferencing process.

A member of your assessment team organizes and chairs the care conferences and will notify the main contact person listed on your file of the care conference approximately one month before the appointment. You will also be assessed less formally quarterly and as your health needs change.

Your interdisciplinary team

Your interdisciplinary resident 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.

You and your family work with the team to develop your Care Plan. The interdisciplinary team is co-ordinated by a registered nurse who is responsible for ensuring overall implementation and evaluation of care.

Check with your care centre to learn what services are required for your support and how they will be delivered.

Resident 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 resident, you are the primary decision maker in your health and supportive care. If a resident 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 resident 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 residents and/or their families/legally recognized alternate decision maker should be able to make informed decisions about available treatments and can, at any time, consent to or refuse treatment. If you decline treatment, you may be asked to sign a statement or a Managed Risk Agreement indicating the treatment declined and your physician will be notified.

If you continually decline support and care, we will discuss the implications for your health with you and your family/legally recognized alternate decision maker. Follow up action may include discharge if we are unable to provide the support that you need.

Physician

You may continue to be followed by your current doctor; however, at most centres, they will need to apply for admitting privileges. If you don't have a doctor, or your doctor is unable to continue your care, we will provide you with a list of several physicians from which you can choose or a physician will be assigned to you. Your physician will direct your medical care and be part of your interdisciplinary care team.

In designated supportive living sites, you will go out to your physician's office for appointments. Communications between the physician and the centre will need to be established with your permission and assistance.

Nursing services

Our nursing staff is responsible for your day-to-day care, and nursing services 24 hours per day. They monitor your professional nursing needs and provide support based on your care plan. Professional nurses will assess your health needs, consult with your 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, portering, toileting, mobility and lifts, and other daily living activities as well as end-of-life care.

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

Our goal for nursing is the promotion of health, maintenance of self-care activities to sustain life and health, recovery from any disease and injury 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 or nurse practitioner, provided by the pharmacy service, and administered by nursing/care staff. You may be able to self-administer medication if you are assessed as suitable for such a program and after centre staff sets you up. 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. Availability of the pharmacist varies from site to site. 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.

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation services for our residents, as needed, may include physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and recreational therapy which help our residents to maintain good health, mobility, and independence. Some centres have these services on site; at other centres the services are based in the community.

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. The therapist regularly evaluates progress to make sure interventions are appropriate.

Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapists assess and treat your functional abilities for self-care, daily living activities, thinking skills and basic communication. The goal of this therapy is to maintain or improve your independence during daily activities, as needed. Occupational therapy services can include wheelchair/seating assessment, splinting, feeding, cognitive assessments, or prescriptions for assistive devices for daily activities and bed positioning.

Recreation Therapy

Recreational therapists assess and address leisure needs and interests and abilities to meet your cognitive, social, physical, spiritual and emotional needs. They provide support, as required, so you can participate in activities that are personally satisfying and enjoyable. They can also adapt programs to meet individual needs regardless of functional or cognitive ability. Staff will encourage the participation of family and friends in your social and recreational activities.

Registered dietitian

The registered dietitian will assess your nutrition needs and establish a nutrition care plan to reflect your health needs and food preferences.

The registered dietitian liaises with the Food Services department to make sure that you are receiving the appropriate diet.

The goals of nutrition care are to provide nutrition for your health and wellbeing, 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 are also 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—your whole person and spiritual wellbeing—in your care plan. Our goal is to support each person 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, weekly services, Bible study, 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 refer to the schedule at your centre for specific dates and times of worship and commemorative services.

Our smoking policy includes accommodation for people who would like to burn sweet grass as part of their spiritual practice. Please contact your centre for specific information.

Some of our locations have a chapel or quiet space where residents and visitors can pray or meditate in quiet. It may have relaxing music creating a comfortable, calming atmosphere.

Volunteer services

Our volunteers are an essential component of continuing care and they add to the quality of resident life by assisting in the many programs planned for our residents. Volunteers bridge the gap between the services which professional and other employees provide, and add the little “extras” which 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 such as respiratory speech, or language therapies. Check your *Centre Profile* for more information about which of these services are available to you. You or your family are responsible for arranging regular dental, optical, and hearing aid services. Please make sure all dentures, glasses and hearing aids are marked with the resident’s name.

Hospitality and support team

Making our continuing care centre your 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 residents’ needs, are planned by a registered dietitian to meet Canada’s Food Guide recommendations for essential nutrients. We regularly revise the menu and adapt it to individual tastes according to the doctors’ prescriptions and dietitians’ annual assessment. Our residents and/or families regularly complete a food survey that helps guide us in the preparation of our menus.



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

If you are missing a particular food, your friends and family are welcome to bring you favourite 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 resident.

Meal times vary slightly across sites; see the *Centre Profile* insert for meal times. The centre will post the daily menu for your review. You will also have access to nutritious snacks and drinks. Your family or friends are welcome to join you for a meal at cost with appropriate notice; please refer to the centre menu for choices.

Our dining room is often decorated for seasonal and special events.

Housekeeping services

The continuing care centre provides housekeeping services for your room and all areas of the centre on a regular basis. We ask all residents and families to help our staff to maintain clean and tidy living areas. Please sort and clean your dresser drawers and closet regularly. You are responsible for cleaning and maintaining all your personal items (such as ornaments, pictures, plants, etc). The care centre is not responsible for the maintenance of, damage to, or loss of personal items kept at the bedside.

Laundry service

If you opt to use our laundry service, all personal clothing is laundered in the facility. Please choose clothing that is durable and made of material that can sustain high heat commercial washing and drying. We also recommend that you have enough clothing for a full week. The laundry service will be billed monthly to your account.

Your family may also choose to take your laundry home or to use the designated washers and dryers, if available on-site. Whether you use the laundry service, do the washing at home or use the available centre laundry machines, your clothing needs to be marked either by the centre laundry service or by you. The care centre is not responsible for damage to or loss of clothing.

Bed linens and towels are changed weekly or as required. You will be responsible for providing and washing your own bed linens in some sites; in other sites a linen service will be available. Please see the *Centre Profile* insert for the service available in your centre.

Maintenance services

Maintenance staff makes sure that our equipment is kept in good condition and is checked as per regulations. While our maintenance staff does not provide maintenance for the residents' personal equipment, they will help you hang pictures, clocks, or mirrors, and connect television sets. Please ask the nursing staff when this service is required. If you bring in any electrical equipment, it must be checked and approved by the maintenance staff.

Transportation

The care centre staff can assist you with coordinating transportation, if required. This is subject to a fee, which is determined by the transportation service provider. If you require someone to accompany you to an outside appointment, it is your or your family's responsibility to arrange and pay for this service.

Beauty parlor/barber shop

Some of our care centres provide access to on-site hairdressing services. If you use these services, you will be charged a fee.

Resident and Family Council

We believe that residents, families, and staff are partners in supportive care. Each facility has a Resident and Family Council that helps shape the innovative and compassionate services we strive to offer. This is a forum where residents, families, and staff can provide formal input and direction into the care centre programs and services, and work collaboratively to improve communications and address concerns. Council members can include:

- Residents
- Family members/Guardians
- Staff
- Invited guests

The goals of the Resident and Family Council include:

- Providing a forum for residents, families, and staff to collaborate on solutions to current collective issues and concerns.
- Promoting activities which contribute to quality of life.
- Facilitating education of residents and families on related topics of interest.
- Providing opportunity for information sharing.
- Providing a sense of belonging and giving a voice for others who are not able to communicate.
- Advocating on behalf of residents.
- Fostering and improving communication between residents, family and staff.
- Facilitating resident and family participation in decision making and providing a forum for input into program and care planning.

The council meets on a regular basis and minutes of all meetings are available for review. To learn more about Resident and Family Council meetings, contact your centre. Your participation is encouraged and greatly appreciated.

To protect the confidentiality of our residents' private personal and health information, the Resident and Family Council is not the place to discuss individual concerns. If you have specific concerns, please refer to the Concerns Resolution Process outlined in this handbook.

Contact information

Refer to your *Centre Profile* insert for the specific contact list or for more information about your Care Team.

Creating a safe environment

Commitment to safety

Our continuing care centre is now your home, and we want you to feel safe and comfortable here. 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 your continuing care centre we do all we can to create a safe place for our residents. Residents and families are expected to also help create this safe environment. At the same time, it is important for us to respect the residents' rights to independence, dignity and comfort. Achieving a balance between residents' safety and rights is our goal.

Care centre security

During the late evening and at night, our main doors are locked for security reasons and to protect any residents who may wander out. Some centres also have an electronic surveillance system for safety and security. Always sign in and out when you enter and exit the centre. This is required for security and in case of any emergency evacuation.

Name tags and IDs

When you move in, 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 resident is missing.

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

Visitors may be requested to sign a guest book and asked to wear a visitor tag when in the building.

Wandering residents

Individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias may be prone to wandering. Residents may also wander in reaction to the behavior of others, sounds, anxiety, insecurity, sleep disorders, medications or a change in caregiver or routine. Occasionally this behavior can lead to residents injuring themselves, infringing on the rights of others or placing themselves or others in danger.

Some areas in the continuing care centre may be secure to protect residents who are prone to wandering. These areas are protected by controlled doors and may require a pass code or buzzer to enter. Some residents may only leave secure units when they are accompanied by a staff or family member.

We believe in preserving residents' right to freedom of movement, while maintaining a safe environment and protecting the privacy of others. To meet this challenge, our staff makes every effort to determine the cause of the behavior and to implement strategies to minimize the risks associated with the behavior. We ask for your

patience and understanding on behalf of these residents as they do not have the ability to control this behavior and are not intentionally trying to be disruptive. As part of our wandering policy, we ask you do not help any resident you do not know go outside.

We attempt to find alternate solutions to ensure our residents' safety before using restraints such as wheelchair seat belts, because use of restraints undermines the dignity of our residents, and can increase agitation, anxiety and risk of injury. One strategy is to house these residents in a secure unit with alarmed doors that activate if the resident tries to leave the unit. The family and care staff may mutually consent to a Managed Risk Agreement which defines the risk of elopement the family is willing to accept if a resident regularly wanders. We also rely on visitors to be watchful when they enter or exit the building to make sure that a resident did not leave the building while the doors were open.

Missing persons

If one of our residents is unaccounted for, we will initiate our Missing Person Procedure. The family and police services may be contacted to become involved in the search. Current photographs of all residents are kept on file at the centre.

Emergency preparedness

Each of our continuing care centres has a specific plan 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 your care centre representative.

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

Fire drills

All of our continuing care centres have alarm pull stations with posted instructions in strategic locations around the centre. Smoke and heat detectors will warn residents and staff in the case of a fire and each centre is also protected with a sprinkler system. You will be oriented to the centre floor plan including all exits, alarm stations, and extinguishers with additional instructions specific to your centre.

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 residents to safety during an actual emergency.

During an emergency, a nurse will take charge. Please obey all orders. At some centres, evacuation and alarm pull maps are posted on each of the doors leading into every resident room.

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, continuing care centre staff will co-ordinate the relocation of residents and staff to a predetermined safe location. Staff will contact resident family members to inform of the evacuation and the location of the residents.

Continuation of services

Each of our continuing care centres has a Continuation of Services Plan to make sure there will be ongoing provision of accommodation services during an unexpected emergency.

Infection control

It is important our staff, volunteers, residents, and visitors, take steps to prevent the spread of infections in our continuing care centres to protect the health of our 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 the care centre 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.

Smoking

All our continuing care centres are non-smoking environments. Residents, family members, visitors and staff are not permitted to smoke on centre property except in designated outdoor smoking areas, if provided.

Alcohol

Our residents are welcome to make choices about the social consumption of alcohol if alcohol is not medically contraindicated. If you choose to drink alcohol, you or your family will have to purchase it, bring it to the centre and secure it in a safe place.

Scent and 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.



Care centre guidelines and policies

Our care centre guidelines and policies will help you feel comfortable and secure in your new home while considering the wellbeing of all our residents.

Ethics committee

All of our continuing care centres have access to an Ethics Committee or consultation, which can provide support to 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 residents 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: www.chac.ca> Resources> Health Ethics Guide. 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 resident 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 residents, 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 representative at your care centre.

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 a specific Covenant Health centre, please contact your continuing care centre representative 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.

Gifts to staff and volunteers

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

Monetary donations to continuing care will be gratefully accepted. These funds will be used for activities or equipment needed to improve the quality of life for our residents. Receipts are issued for income tax purposes.

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 Director of Care, or the Senior Director.

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

Security of valuables

Please do not keep valuables or more than \$5 in cash in your room. The care centre does not accept responsibility for these items. We recommend your family keeps your valuables at their home.

Some centres may have a trust account for each resident, so you can easily pay for personal items and services at the centre.

Tenant insurance

If you are concerned about your valuables, you can purchase tenant insurance through an external provider, which protects your property and the contents of your room. It also provides you with liability coverage if you cause damage to the facility or another person. Tenant insurance is optional and the responsibility of you and your family.

Discharge

You may be discharged from your continuing care centre if your health improves or you require a different level of care. It is not uncommon to find that your health improves after admission to a continuing care centre 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 that level of support is different from that provided by your current care centre.

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 resident to another continuing care centre if we can no longer support your health care needs.

Vacating room

If you move away from your continuing care centre, you and your family are responsible to remove your personal belongings within the time frames discussed with continuing care staff. Any belongings you or your family leave longer than 30 days after your discharge will be donated to a community charity.



Resident's family and friends

Transition to continuing care

Families play an important role in the health, well-being, and care of their family member. Staff appreciate your involvement, which can help make this transition more positive. We know families also experience a period of transition when their family member moves into a care centre.

Visiting guidelines

While you are visiting your family member, please keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Our visiting hours are flexible; however, in some circumstances due to the condition of the resident or other residents, visiting hours may be restricted.
- Mutual respect is requested between visitors, staff and residents.
- Resident confidentiality is respected. Therefore we ask that you do not enter certain areas where resident information is kept.
- You are welcome to accompany visitors to other areas of the building; however, please be mindful of other residents' private space.
- 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.

Tips for making the most of your visit

It's normal to feel a little uncomfortable about visiting your loved one in a new situation and it is an adjustment for everyone. Here are some tips for making the most of your visit:

- Plan visits in advance so your loved one can enjoy the anticipation of a visit.
- Make a routine with other visitors so the resident can look forward to regular visits with a variety of people.
- Do activities your loved one enjoys, such as needlework, painting, gardening, going for walks, playing cards, or reading out loud.
- Get involved! Participate in recreation programs or consider volunteering.
- Offer a change of scenery by taking your loved one on an outing, to run errands, or shop, to keep appointments, or for a car ride.

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 behaviour 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.

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. Care centre staff can request any uncontrolled pets be immediately removed.

Some of our centres have a resident pet as part of a pet therapy program.



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 (low scent)
- Gift certificates or prepaid cards for haircuts or other services
- 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

Booking private function rooms

At some of our continuing care centres, 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 your continuing care centre Food Services 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. Planning vacations or 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.

During any absence, whether social or medical, residents continue to pay for the daily accommodation rate.

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 is adequate notice so our nursing staff can prepare necessary medications and supplies.

Medical leave

Separate from social leave, residents may be admitted into another centre or the hospital for medical care or treatment. Residents can keep their room during a medical leave.

Contact person

Please provide current family contact phone numbers and addresses to the continuing care staff on your loved one's unit.

Private additional services

Some residents or families may hire private service providers, such as paid companions, for social visiting or to offer additional help with activities of daily living. Private service providers must adhere to Covenant Health policies and standards. Talk to your continuing care centre staff about these policies and standards of care before hiring a private service provider.

Coping with dementia

Dementia involves the loss of memory, judgment, reasoning, and social skills, as well as changes in behaviour.

It is usually caused by damage in the brain from diseases such as Alzheimer's disease or strokes. Some symptoms may be treated, but dementia is a progressive, chronic illness and there is no cure.

Centre staff have received training and are experienced in providing care for individuals with dementia. It is normal for family members to have difficulty coping with a loved one developing dementia.

For more information, please talk with your care centre staff or contact one of the following organizations:

Alzheimer Society of Alberta and North West Territories

www.alzheimer.ab.ca

Tel: 780.488.2266

Toll free: 1.866.950.5465

Email: info@alzheimer.ab.ca

The Alzheimer Society of Canada

www.alzheimer.ca

Toll-free: 1.800.616.8816

Email: info@alzheimer.ca

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.

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 services could include care from nurses, therapists, healthcare 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.

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 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**.



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.

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 dependant 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.



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