



# Relational Advocacy: Building Sustainable Win-Win Solutions

Increase quality of life in long-term care with what we already have:

Our Conversations!

**Lisa Dawson, President  
Independent Long-Term Care Councils  
Association of BC  
(ILTCCABC)**



# Who Am I?



Lisa Dawson

- Family Caregiver to Father

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# ILTCCABC Structure



## Your Local long-term care home Family Council

- Regulation 59
- Relationship Building
- Resident Quality of Life

## Your Regional Association of Family Councils

- Volunteers with lived experience
- Elevating voices in every health authority
- Virtual family council forums for support and education

## Your Provincial Association of Family Councils

- Meets monthly – 3 representatives from each region
- Meets with our Ministry of Health quarterly
- Makes known long-term care systemic issues and our recommendations (advocacy)



## Learning outcomes?



- How Family Councils make a difference
- How challenges are really opportunities
- How a relational approach is the bridge to positive outcomes

# How ILTCCABC begin? LTC FAMILY CAREGIVERS History - Before COVID

- ▶ isolated,
- ▶ frustrated,
- ▶ no mechanism of communication,
- ▶ every resident and their family for themselves,
- ▶ no education on how to be a family caregiver to someone in long-term care
- ▶ no knowledge of “what’s next”.



# LTC FAMILY CAREGIVERS Experience during COVID

Policy Making  
without  
Engagement  
had devastating  
effects



# Family and Resident opportunity after COVID

## A Remarkable Milestone



Independent Long-Term Care Councils Association of BC



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## A Remarkable Milestone For Family Councils In Long-Term Care Homes In BC

By ILTCCABC | November 3, 2022

*Written by Nola Galloway, President, Independent Long-Term Care Councils Association of BC, January 2023*

Nov 3, 2022, [in a public media release](#), the BC Ministry of Health (MoH) announced new residential care regulations re operations of resident councils and family councils in long-term care (LTC) homes plus the creation of avenues to ensure residents and their families and representatives could elevate their collective voice not only to the LTC facility operator, but to the Health Authority and the MoH.

# What is a family council?

**November 3, 2022**

BC Ministry of Health announced changes in the residential Care Regulations to support Resident and Family Engagement by way of councils in all long-term care homes across BC





# 1. Encourage and offer support

... for one another;  
reducing a sense of  
isolation,  
helplessness,  
frustration.



## 2. Deepen relationships and influence a relational approach to long-term care

Councils invite staff to educate family about their role with their loved one and how we can work together for best outcomes.





### 3. Problem solve

- Identify issues,
- Learn about the current process,
- Provide recommendations,
- Discuss solutions with management,
- Celebrate successes,
- Advocate for continuous quality improvement within the long-term care home.

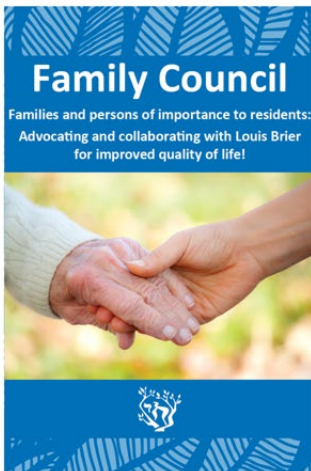


Before (top) After (bottom)

# 4. Communicate and educate



## Family Council Education Session



**TOPIC:**  
**Dementia Care -  
Making the Most  
out of your visit  
with those who  
have Dementia**

- ▶ About your care home (policies, procedures, care team, etc.)
- ▶ About issues relating to residents and the long-term care system (dementia, diabetes, food, recreation etc.)
- ▶ About how to influence change based on common ground: resident well being

# 5. Advocate



Local Level: Elevate the resident/family collective voice to decision makers of the long-term care home

Regional Level: Elevate the councils' voices from long-term care home to the regional level

Provincial Level: Elevate the 5 regional voices to the provincial association of councils (ILTCCABC).



# Building a Positive Council–Operator Relationship in Long-Term Care

**April 7 2026**

Presented by Lisa Dawson, President,  
Independent Long-Term Care Councils Association BC ([ILTCCABC](https://www.iltccabc.ca))



**Raise Your Voice:**  
**[How to Increase the Effectiveness of Resident and Family Councils in Long-Term Care Homes.](#)**  
**Canadian Journal on Aging**

WATCH the 7 min video:

[LINK](#)

DOWNLOAD the Council Effectiveness Tool

[LINK](#)

LEARN from the 1- page infographic about the key findings from their research:

[LINK](#)

## Summary

- Know what **positive** looks like – **Live it**
- Understand what a **positive relationship** requires
- **Be aware:** operational challenges and family council challenges
- Re-anchor on the **shared goal:** resident safety, dignity, and quality of life.
- Strengthen **communication**
- **Build skills** & understanding
- **Embed Collaboration**
- Formalize **expectations**
- **Sustain commitment**



# What a “successful” relationship looks like

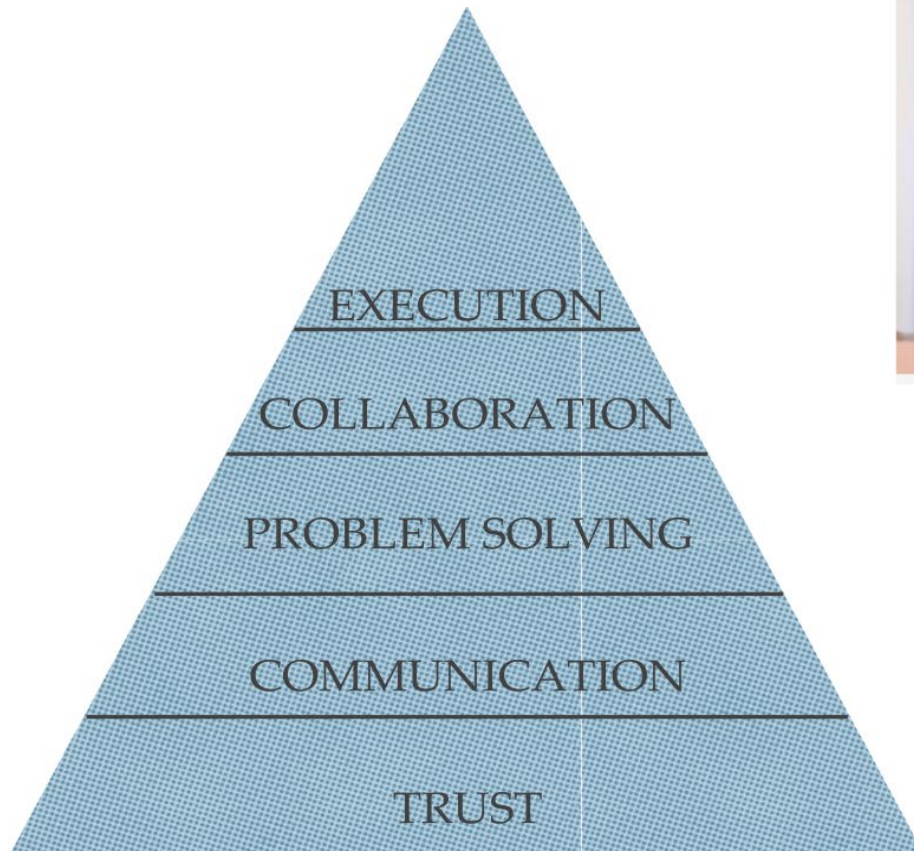
With the goal aligned, let's define what a positive relationship looks like.

- Mutual Respect, Appreciation and Trust
- Clear, honest, and 2-way, closed loop, regular, communication
- Collaboration and shared decision-making
- Commitment and Accountability
- Focus on the Shared Goal





## Developing Relationships to Influence Outcomes: The Relationship Triangle



**The interdependency of expectations, understanding and trust:**

**...they all impact and influence each other**

**1 Standardize tools:**  
newsletters, bulletin boards, web pages, and shared platforms, admission package, resource rack, pamphlet



**2 Update distribution list with newcomers on first day, share the organization chart, update as it changes**



**3 Promote and engage councils**  
(invite to committees, accreditation, employee recognition programs)



**4 Map decision authority**  
to route feedback to the right people.



**5 Structure meetings**  
with clear agendas, follow-ups, and accountability.



**Long-Term  
Care Home**  
Strengthen the  
communication  
infrastructure.

# CONVERSATION OPENERS



- We would really like your point of view on the food service issue we have on the agenda before we begin this discussion.
- FC seeks your help to support our staff be able to complete their task when they attend to resident ADLs. In the end, improvement following the ADL will make life easier for everyone.
- FC would like your help with something. Can we talk about it (soon)? (If the person says, "Sure, let me get back to you," be sure to follow up.)
- FC thinks we have different perceptions about care aides having kitchen duty as well as food service support. We'd like to hear your thinking on this.
- FC is curious about the ongoing rodent issue and efforts to eradicate the problem. We'd like to bounce an idea off you.

# Family Council Core Work

Promote



Support



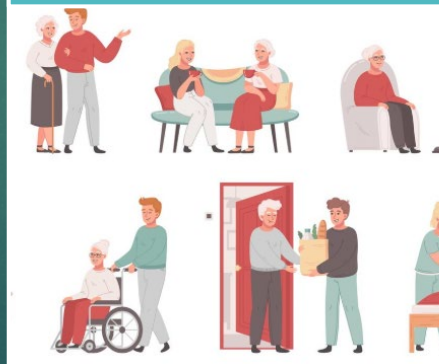
Advance



Mentor



Advocate



# Questions ?

Independent Long-Term Care  
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