



Interior Health  
*For your whole life*

# Family Council Resource Guide



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# INTRODUCTION

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Family Councils play an important role for residents of care facilities, their families and their friends. They help provide families with support and information, and provide an opportunity for two-way communication with the care facility. Family councils can play an important role in improving the quality of the care environment.

Seniors living in Residential Care are often not able to speak for themselves. Family Councils can help to improve communication between families, staff and care home leaders, and provide opportunities to work together in the interest of the residents. Families may also find support from each other by participating in the council.

The BC Ministry of Health supports the development of Family Councils in the residential care sector. The Ministry of Health defines a Resident/Family Council as “a group consisting of persons in care and/or their representatives, family members and contact persons who work together with staff to maintain and enhance the quality of life of residents and to provide a voice in decisions within the facility that affect them.” (BC Home and Community Care Ministry of Health Services, 2011) (See Appendix II for the Ministry of Health Policy).

This guide will provide background information, council meeting tools and resources to support the development of Family Councils in Interior Health residential care facilities. Note that in some facilities the Family Council may be combined with a Resident Council to form a Resident/Family Council, when it makes sense to do so and is supported by management.

“Guidelines for the Development of Resident or Family Council” provided by Home and Community Care, Ministry of Health Services, can be found at <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/topic.page?id=96139325762343BB9F289A0C0F73D868>

Interior Health Authority would like to acknowledge and thank Fraser Health for the development and sharing of the Fraser Health Resident and Family Council Resource Guide, from which most of the content for this document was taken.

# I. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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Please refer to the Interior Health Residential policy on Family Council when organizing your Family Council. (See Appendix I for the Interior Health Family Council Policy.)

We know that every residential home is unique. The guidelines and samples contained in this resource guide are provided to assist and support Family Councils regardless of location.

The Interior Health Residential Leadership Team actively supports Family Councils. We value and respect the people who live and work in our homes and we will do our very best to respond to their changing needs.



## 2. GUIDELINES FOR FAMILY COUNCILS

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### TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terms of Reference outline how the Family Council will function.

#### Developing a Terms of Reference

In 2011 / 12 a working group was established to survey the organization, undertake an environmental scan and develop Terms of Reference that could be used throughout Residential Sites in Interior Health for both Resident Councils and Family Councils.

Terms of Reference should be established by the council during the first or second meeting and reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they meet current needs of the Council. (See Appendix A of the Interior Health Family Council Policy for a Terms of Reference template.)

It is recommended that councils adopt the template contained in the policy. Any variations from that template should be approved by the site Manager.

### CODE OF CONDUCT

A “Code of Conduct” sets expectations of how council members wish each other to act, and identifies behaviours that are acceptable to the members of the Family Council. Generally, the “Code of Conduct” is developed by the Family Council and includes such items as “respect, caring, and listening”. New council members should be provided with a copy as part of their orientation to family council<sup>1</sup>.

### ORGANIZING A FAMILY COUNCIL

Family councils have become more and more important not only as a voice for residents but as a place where family members can find support.

#### Responsibility of the Residential Site Manager/Leadership Team

The Home and Community Care Policy Manual (Appendix II) requires that site leadership provide support to Resident and Family Councils as follows:

- Provide meeting space, a staff liaison and access to common information on the roles of councils and tools to develop or operate a council.

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<sup>1</sup> Fraser Health Resources Guide, 2012

- Identify communication channels and encourage collaborative relationships between staff, families and volunteers.
- Provide information to assist the family councils in functioning effectively and supporting a respectful and encouraging environment.
- Encourage opportunities for family councils to participate in regional education and networking opportunities.
- Communicate with facility staff and determine who will be the staff liaison and what that involves.

**Additional roles for site management may also include:**

- Encouragement and enthusiasm for the development and ongoing operation of the council.
- Education and information to care staff regarding the role of the council.
- Conducting surveys and other related activities to identify interest in developing a council (if one not in place at present) or to revise council terms and focus.
- Support continuing engagement of membership by reaching out to family members regarding participation in the council.
- Assisting with sourcing of guest speakers or organizational delegates to educate families or answer specific questions.
- Attend and participate as invited by the committee to provide updates on action items assigned.
- Consider involving council members in obtaining feedback that may trigger changes resulting in improved quality of care for residents (e.g. food feedback, conducting tours of the home and relaying information on the culture of the home).
- Create time on the agenda for reporting progress on projects/action items and to report and celebrate successes.

**Family Members organizing meetings should consider:**

- Meetings should be short, with a clear agenda.
- Meeting agenda items should focus on common topics of interest, rather than on an individual's personal experience.
- Meeting minutes should be available to residents and families.
- Setting dates for future meetings well in advance.
- Inviting interesting guest speakers (the Manager may assist in identifying topics and speakers).

## **REVIVE & SURVIVE FOR EXISTING COUNCILS**

Over time, the Family Council membership will change as members leave. Family members may no longer have family living at the home. Many people think changes to group membership means that the group will not run as well. In fact, research shows that groups where there are membership changes are more successful in getting things done!<sup>2</sup>

Welcoming new members so that they feel accepted is very important. A warm and friendly council, where new members are greeted and feel part of the group, will keep members coming back.

Keeping energy levels high at meetings by providing education and information will encourage members to return as well. Discussions that end in solutions leave members feeling that they have contributed. Family Council activities, done together to the benefit of residents, make a difference and are to be celebrated.

Make sure everyone has a chance to speak at meetings; explore new ways to connect with members and staff. Celebrate your accomplishments!

## **MAINTAINING MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS & RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS**

When council members come together for the first time, or when new members join the group, the experience can be uncomfortable. If the meeting is welcoming and people are friendly, family members are more likely to return. Keep meetings fun and interesting.

Although Family Councils do important things as a whole, the group will be stronger and more committed to the home if each member feels valued for their participation. It can't be stressed enough that people should be noticed for what they do and celebrated for their help in making changes to improve life and work within the care home.

Simple things to create a good atmosphere at meetings will help members be more likely to return; councils may wish to consider:

- Inviting and greeting new members on a personal basis.
- Wearing name tags.
- Matching new members with a current council member (one-to-one).
- Providing refreshments.
- Listening to what everyone has to say.
- Balancing meeting topics.
- Providing time for “good news stories” at each meeting.

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<sup>2</sup> Fraser Health Resource Guide, 2012



A process for recruiting new members should be in place at each home.

An easy way to encourage residents' families to be involved is for staff to discuss the topic as a normal part of the moving in process. This may occur immediately upon moving in or within a couple weeks of the move. New family members should be connected to a family council member who can speak to the important role the council plays in speaking on behalf of residents. Gathering e-mail addresses and permission to contact families with council information is a good start too. Follow-up contact with the family, by a council member, a few weeks after admission may help encourage participation as long as the family gives their permission to be contacted. (See "Communication Processes: How to Communicate with Families" for more suggestions on recruiting members).

## **COUNCIL SIZE**

Experience and research shows that an aim of family membership equivalent to 10% of the resident population is a reasonable target of participation and representation<sup>3</sup>.

## **INFORMAL COMMUNICATION WHEN NO FAMILY COUNCIL**

While establishing a formal Family Council may not always be possible, informal communication is still possible. Families are encouraged to reach out to the manager of the site.

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<sup>3</sup> Fraser Health Resource Guide, 2012

# 3. CONDUCTING EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

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## SETTING THE AGENDA

Decide on how you want the meeting set out before making the agenda; then decide on the important issues for discussion and determine topics for the meeting.

- The agenda should be clear so that council members can:
  - ◆ Understand it easily.
  - ◆ Have time to think about it.
  - ◆ Seek more information if needed before the meeting.
- Allow time for:
  - ◆ Introductions.
  - ◆ Welcoming of new members.
  - ◆ Review of previous minutes.
  - ◆ Review of the agenda.
  - ◆ Continuing business.
  - ◆ New business.
  - ◆ Announcements.
  - ◆ Discussion of items for the next meeting's agenda.
- Write time limits for each topic on the agenda to keep members on track. Share meeting responsibilities with other council members by:
  - ◆ Assigning tasks.
  - ◆ Seeking volunteers.
  - ◆ Make the agenda available prior to the meeting if possible and distribute it at the meeting.
  - ◆ Keep the meeting short, and allow time for coffee and mingling.

(See Appendix IV for sample Agenda template)



## PLANNING FOR A SUCCESSFUL MEETING

- Before the meeting:
  - ◆ Ask the staff liaison for help in planning the meeting if needed.
  - ◆ Make tea/coffee as needed.
  - ◆ Try different communication methods to let members know about the meeting (see section on “Communicating Information about the Family Council”).
  - ◆ Invite members to submit suggestions for the agenda (see Appendix V for sample Agenda Suggestion template).
  - ◆ Contact speakers and others playing a role in the meeting and check that any information or equipment will be provided.
  - ◆ Staff may assist in arranging for equipment (as it is available, e.g. flip charts, audio/visual materials).
  - ◆ Pre-circulate background information on topics for discussion so everyone is “in the know”.
  - ◆ Have copies of any required written material available for the meeting.
  - ◆ Promote diversity.
  - ◆ Identify a “Secretary” to take minutes (See Appendix VI for Meeting Minutes template).
- During the meeting:
  - ◆ Have members sign in on the sheet provided (See Appendix VII for Sign in Sheet template) and have attendees sign the code of conduct agreement.
  - ◆ Collect phone numbers and e-mail addresses for information sharing purposes (See Appendix IX for Information Sharing Sheet template).
  - ◆ Start the meeting on time.
  - ◆ Remind members at the start of the meeting about the purpose of Family Council and that confidentiality will be respected.
  - ◆ If items not on the agenda come up, defer them to the next meeting.

- Maintain group interest by:
  - ◆ Discussing unimportant items quickly.
  - ◆ Keeping highlights short.
  - ◆ Trying to involve everyone.
- When issues are discussed:
  - ◆ Try gathering a list of ideas to find solutions (e.g. brain-storming...no wrong answer).
  - ◆ Be open to all possibilities.
  - ◆ Decide on next steps.
  - ◆ Ignore irrelevant comments.
  - ◆ Summarize points or agreements made.
  - ◆ Reinforce points that are in line with the meeting's purpose.
  - ◆ Allow time for positive feedback and what is working well.
- After the meeting:
  - ◆ Send thank you notes to guests/speakers.
  - ◆ Follow up on discussions held at the meeting (e.g. members assigned to certain actions).
  - ◆ Prepare and distribute minutes of the meeting.
  - ◆ Begin planning the next meeting.

### **HOW TO BEGIN TO DEAL WITH ISSUES THAT ARE AFFECTING RESIDENTS OR THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS<sup>4</sup>**

- Clearly identify and articulate the concern.
- Try to define what the measures of a good solution would be (what would success look like?).
- Come up with a variety of possible solutions (no wrong answer).
- Assess possible solutions looking at the advantages and disadvantages of each.
- Share both the issue and the potential solutions with the Interior Health staff lead, and request an opportunity to discuss.
- Provide an opportunity at the next meeting to update on the status of the issue resolution.

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<sup>4</sup> Adapted from the Fraser Health Resource Guide, 2012

## **KEEPING IT INTERESTING AT MEETINGS**

### **Suggestions for Education**

- Living in care.
- How to cope with different illnesses.
- Disease progression awareness (e.g. Dementia).
- End of life preparation and planning.
- Estate planning.
- How to make your visit meaningful.

(You may want to circulate a Meeting Planner to raise awareness of upcoming education or activities of interest at meetings. See Appendix IX for a Meeting Plan template).

### **Suggestions for Activities & Initiatives**

- Suggestions for entertainment events for residents.
- Planning for seasonal activities, décor & celebration (Valentines, Easter, Halloween, Christmas etc.) including outdoor decorating.
- Christmas gift bags for residents without families.
- Musician visits.
- Special arts and crafts activities.

## 4. CODE OF CONDUCT ISSUES

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As identified in the Terms of Reference, members are expected to follow the Code of Conduct. Challenges sometimes occur at meetings when the Code of Conduct is not followed. In these situations the chair and other members may feel uncomfortable.

It is helpful to realize that family members attend council meetings for many different reasons. They may have different ideas on how or why things should be done. Past experiences will affect how people behave in any situation.

Although we can't change a person's experience, it is helpful to acknowledge what they are going through.

## 5. COMMUNICATING INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESIDENT AND/OR FAMILY COUNCIL

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### WAYS STAFF MAY ASSIST WITH COMMUNICATION

As a normal part of the moving in (admission) process, time will be dedicated to explain the importance of family council and how families can participate (this may occur immediately upon moving in or within the first few weeks of the resident's stay).

If family members express an interest in Family Council, then staff will provide contacts and information. Staff will remind and encourage families to attend meetings.

Staff can be invited by the Family Council to participate in activities organized by the Council (e.g. annual events etc.).

### WAYS THE FAMILY COUNCIL CAN COMMUNICATE WITH FAMILIES

- Collect family member e-mail addresses when residents move in, with permission to contact them regarding Family Council.
- Create an Information Sharing Sheet for each meeting which includes an agreement to release contact info to the Family Council for the purpose of mailings/future contact (see Appendix VIII for sample Information Sharing Sheet template).
- Implement a “meet and greet”, volunteer council member to assist new members in feeling welcome (one-to-one personal contact works best; the number one reason that people volunteer is because they were asked!)<sup>5</sup>.
- Consider various ways to distribute Family Council information such as:
  - ◆ e-mail;
  - ◆ newsletters;
  - ◆ posters in elevators and on bulletin boards (See Appendix X for sample Meeting Invitation template);
  - ◆ develop a Family Council brochure and leave it readily available at the home;

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5 Ontario Family Councils' Program, 2010

- ◆ make available, a list of “frequently asked questions” (See Appendix XI for a sample list of Frequently Asked Questions); and
- ◆ include a Resident Council representative in Family Council meetings, if there is both a Resident and Family Council. It is important to ensure the two groups have regular communication.
- Consider new ways for members to participate in Family Council meetings (think ‘outside the box’):
  - ◆ think about inviting members to submit agenda items for discussion even if they can’t attend meetings (see Appendix V for sample Agenda Suggestion template).
- Issues that are unique to a specific resident or family member should be dealt with outside of Family Council meetings on a 1:1 basis with administration.





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# APPENDICES

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# APPENDIX I

## INTERIOR HEALTH FAMILY COUNCILS IN RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES POLICY

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### RCAH0200 – FAMILY COUNCILS IN RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES

#### 1.0 PURPOSE

To align with the Ministry of Health guidelines<sup>1</sup> for the creation of Family Councils in Interior Health Authority operated sites.

#### 2.0 DEFINITIONS

Family Council: Is a group of people consisting of family members and representatives of persons in care (our residents) who work together with staff to maintain and enhance the quality of life of residents and to provide a voice in decisions within the facility that affect them.

Healthcare Foundation Each Interior Health Foundation is an independent, volunteer-driven charitable organization, governed by a board of respected community leaders, volunteers and business persons; committed to enhancing the delivery of health care to the patients, residents and clients of Interior Health.

#### 3.0 POLICY

##### 3.1 Family Council Establishment

Councils are established in order to promote a supportive and collaborative forum where, family members and unit/site staff can discuss successes and opportunities for improvement, and work together to provide a respectful, collaborative, caring environment for the residents, their families and staff, which promotes quality of life and living.

In addition to Family Councils (see Appendix A) all Interior Health residential facilities are encouraged to establish a Resident Council

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<sup>1</sup> Guidelines for the Development of Resident or Family Councils, Home and Community Care, Ministry of Health

(see Appendix B). The two (2) Councils may be joined together where appropriate and agreed upon by management.

### **3.2 Council Meetings**

Family Council meetings will:

1. Facilitate and enhance communication between the residents, family members, staff and management.
2. Enhance opportunities for unit and/or site staff to work collaboratively with residents and family on matters affecting the residents' day-to-day living.
3. To provide a forum for discussion and planning for unit specific events, activities and celebrations.
4. Identify areas of concern that would benefit from a collaborative approach.
5. Promote information sharing on upcoming changes
6. Allow for education on relevant topics, including guest speakers.

### **3.3 Fundraising**

1. The purpose of a Family Council is not to fund raise, however some Family Councils may choose to raise funds for specific items not covered by the care home.
2. Due to the Residential Care Regulation<sup>2</sup>, to ensure benefit achieved through any purchase and in order to minimize ongoing expenses and operating cost impacts, the purpose for which funds are raised must be determined in collaboration with and gain the final approval of the Residential Care Manager or designate.
3. Any excess funds (greater than \$2500) should be held in trust by a Healthcare Foundation, while all funds raised will be deposited to an Interior Health Cost Center for the Family Council.

## **4.0 PROCEDURES**

1. Council members should review the "Interior Health Family Council Handbook" prior to establishment of a meeting format and use the contents of the guide to drive its meeting processes.
2. The attached Terms of Reference template should be used by the Council. Any amendments to the attached template must be in keeping with the suggestions outlined in the "handbook" and endorsed by site management.
3. Attendees of each meeting will agree to and sign the code of conduct which also covers privacy issues.

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<sup>2</sup> Community Care and Assisted Living Act, Residential Care Regulation

4. All meetings must be carried out with a quorum of 50% plus one member. Voting, if required, will be based on a majority count.
5. Should a resident move to another facility or pass away, membership of their family member in the Family Council will cease within 30 days.

## **5.0 REFERENCES**

1. Ministry of Health Guidelines for the creation of Resident/Family Councils

## **APPENDIX A FAMILY COUNCIL TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Family Council Terms of Reference (Facility Name)**

#### **Philosophy**

To improve the quality of life and quality of care for all residents of (facility name) by promoting an atmosphere of respect, collaboration, sensitivity, caring and support among staff, residents and their family members, volunteers, and friends.

#### **Purpose**

- To enhance the communication and education of families
- To focus on opportunities to improve the life of the residents
- To provide educational opportunities for families to enhance their understanding of the experience of residents in care
- To provide mutual support for all residents and their families
- To promote a positive attitude towards aging and the role of residents' families
- To provide a forum for discussion and resolution regarding concerns and complaints and take action as appropriate, maintaining confidentiality at all times
- To welcome families of new residents, offering support and assistance
- To provide a forum for resident/family engagement for decision-making where appropriate, such as providing input on capital requests or building renovations, as examples.

#### **Membership**

Membership is open to all family members and representatives of persons in care (residents). While more than one representative per resident is welcomed to participate, when decisions are required by the committee, only one

representative per resident may vote. The facility will designate a staff liaison for collaboration and information-sharing. The liaison will also ensure that a timely response is provided back to the Family Council when concerns and questions are raised.

**a) Positions and Duties**

Members shall be selected for positions as needed (to be determined by the membership) in order to carry out the administrative/support functions of the Council and will include designates responsible for the following:

- facilitating meetings
- recording, distributing and posting meeting minutes
- organizing and coordinating activities/ events/education sessions

**b) Selection**

Selection of Council positions shall be by vote of the membership as per term identified above.

**c) Membership Term**

Terms of these positions will be for one year, with the opportunity to be re-elected for an additional one year term.

- Subcommittees to carry out specific projects/functions may be formed as needed, under the direction of the council.

**Conducting Meetings**

Meetings shall maintain a regular schedule at a time identified to be appropriate by the membership. A frequency of not less than quarterly (every three months) is recommended.

**a) Decision Making**

All meetings will be carried out with a quorum of 50% plus one voting members. Any decisions will be determined by vote, with the majority vote being accepted.

**b) Confidentiality**

The code of conduct form (see Family Council handbook) will be signed by all attendees at the start of each meeting. Signature of this document indicates agreement to adhere both to the code of conduct and to rules of confidentiality.

## **Amendments to the Terms**

Amendments may be made to these Terms of Reference at any regular meeting of the Council, by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote among those present providing the suggested changes have been presented at the previous Council meeting.

**This Council may be combined with the Resident Council where indicated.**

## **APPENDIX B RESIDENT COUNCIL TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Resident Council Terms of Reference (Facility Name)**

#### **Philosophy**

To enhance the quality of life for all residents at (facility name) by promoting an atmosphere of respect, collaboration, sensitivity, caring and support among residents, staff, volunteers, friends and family members.

#### **Purpose**

- To provide an opportunity for involvement and participation by residents, family members or significant others and staff in discussions that influence decisions related to such items as activities and programming, and furniture for common areas, etc.
- To provide opportunities for residents and their families to be informed about and involved in planning upcoming events and evaluation of past events
- To establish a sense of community through promotion of an atmosphere of inclusion, education and communication
- To welcome new residents
- To provide a forum for residents to voice their suggestions, concerns and compliments regarding, for example, menu approval.

#### **Membership**

Membership is open to all residents who live in (facility name). Family members, friends and loved ones are encouraged to attend meetings in order to assist their resident in participating.

Ad Hoc members may be invited as indicated by Agenda

#### **Staff Liaison**

A Staff Liaison will be appointed by the Manager and approved by the Resident council. The Liaison will facilitate the running of the Council, including assistance

with developing the agenda, chairing/co-chairing (with resident representative) the meetings, producing and distributing minutes and notes, inviting guest speakers and guest attendees. The Staff Liaison will attend each meeting but will not have a vote at Council.

### **Meetings**

Meetings will maintain a regular schedule at a time identified to be appropriate by the membership and meeting the minimum standard of eight meetings per year.

### **Agenda and Minutes**

An Agenda will be prepared for each meeting. Minutes will be taken to record the proceedings of each meeting, distributed and posted within the building for all residents and families to access

### **Amendments**

Amendments may be made to these Terms of Reference at any regular meeting of the Council by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote among those present providing the suggested changes have been presented at the previous Council meeting and have received approval from the Facility Manager.

**This council may be combined with the Family Council where indicated.**

Ministry of Health Seniors BC


Association of Advocates for Care Reform

Residential Care Regulations



# APPENDIX II MINISTRY OF HEALTH POLICY

## Residential Care Services Page 19 (British Columbia Ministry of Health, 2011)

	<b>HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE POLICY MANUAL</b>
<b>CHAPTER:</b> 6 RESIDENTIAL CARE SERVICES	<b>NUMBER:</b> 6.H
<b>SECTION:</b> H RESIDENT AND FAMILY COUNCILS	<b>PAGE:</b> 1 OF 1
<b>SUBSECTION:</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE:</b> OCTOBER 15, 2012

**Intent**  
To describe health authorities' responsibilities to ensure that resident/family councils are encouraged and supported.

**Policy**  
Health authorities must support the development of resident/family councils to promote the interests of clients and support the on-going role of family caregivers in residential care facilities by:

- providing meeting space, staff liaison and access to common information on the roles of councils and tools to develop or operate a council;
- identifying communication channels and encouraging collaborative relationships between staff, families and volunteers;
- providing information to assist the resident/family councils in functioning effectively and supporting a respectful and encouraging environment; and
- encouraging opportunities for resident/family councils to participate in regional education and networking opportunities.

**Reference**  
Residential Care Regulation

# APPENDIX III

## CODE OF CONDUCT (SAMPLE)

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### CODE OF CONDUCT FOR (NAME OF FACILITY) FAMILY COUNCIL MEMBERS

*“This is home to your loved one”*

**Preamble:** Individual actions of Family Council members reflect on Family Council as a whole, therefore the actions of all members should ensure that Family Council maintains its respect. The reputation and image of the Family Council should be considered in each member’s communications and actions.

The wearing of a Family Council “Name Tag” is a sign of service and support, and indicates personal commitment to our Mission Statement.

Measures of an effective Family Council Member:

- Shows respect, sensitivity and consideration for all persons you meet in our Residential Care Home (residents, staff, visitors and volunteers).
- Respects resident privacy and confidentiality of information discussed at Family Council Meetings.
- Avoids making judgments on any situation in the absence of all of the facts.
- Recognizes that all persons are unique individuals and is sensitive to this.
- Respects that each resident and family member has the opportunity to advocate on their own behalf. Family Council members should only advocate on behalf of a resident and/or their family members with consent.
- Understands that the intent of advocacy is to actively speak out on behalf of their family alone.
- Follows the communication chain of command when addressing concerns.
- Does not intervene in any resident’s care before consulting the staff member responsible for their care.
- Recognizes that idle, sensational or groundless talk (gossip) about any person is harmful and hurtful.
- Has a clear understanding of abuse (financial, physical and emotional) and reports any abuse immediately to the Manager/Director of Care/Resident Care Coordinator on duty.
- Knows and follows the rules of (name of home).
- Leads by example.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ Agree to this Code of Conduct<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> References: Ontario Family Councils’ Program (2010. Your Guide to Starting and Maintaining a Family Council. Retrieved January 5, 2012, from Ontario Family Councils’ Program: [www.familycouncilmembers.net/resources/tags/manual](http://www.familycouncilmembers.net/resources/tags/manual)

# APPENDIX IV AGENDA (SAMPLE)

**(NAME OF FACILITY) FAMILY COUNCIL  
MEETING AGENDA  
(DATE & TIME OF MEETING)**

**Teleconference Option: (phone #), participant code (?), chair code (?)**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Time</b>
1. Welcome, introductions and opening remarks	5 min
2. Approve Agenda & Review Code of Conduct	5 min
3. Approval of minutes	5 min
4. Reports of officers, committees 4.1 Co-Chair report 4.2 (name of committee) report	15 min
5. Unfinished business 5.1 (event planning)	15 min
6. Business Arising 6.1 (member issue) - refer to Agenda Suggestion sheet 6.1.1 Discussion of the problem 6.1.2 How you will measure success 6.1.3 Brainstorm possible solutions 6.1.4 Discuss possible solutions 6.1.5 Select a solution 6.1.6 Develop a specific plan of action	60 min
7. Celebrate Council successes	10 min
8. Wrap up and next steps 8.1. Review who's doing what regarding action items	10 min

(Time allotments are suggestions only and can be adjusted to suit your needs)

# APPENDIX V

## AGENDA SUGGESTION (SAMPLE)

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### AGENDA SUGGESTION

A brief summary is requested to prepare members and provide information regarding the topic to be discussed. Please forward to Family Council Co-Chair (name) at (e-mail address) or leave at (drop box location at facility).

<b>Agenda Item</b>	
<b>Submitted By</b>	
<b>Time Required</b>	
<b>Issue/Question</b>	
<b>Background Information</b>	
<b>Recommendation</b>	

(Staff may wish to help residents fill out this form for Resident Council meetings)

# APPENDIX VI MEETING MINUTES (SAMPLE)

<b>(name of care home) Family Council</b>			
<b>Meeting Minutes</b>			
<b>Meeting Date</b>			
<b>Location</b>			
<b>Time</b>			
<b>Present</b>			
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Action/ Follow-up</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>
<b>Next Meeting</b>			

# APPENDIX VII SIGN IN SHEET (SAMPLE)

<b>SIGN-IN SHEET</b> (name of home) Family Council Meeting			
<b>Date</b>			
In signing this document I will honour the confidentiality & Code of Conduct of the “Terms of Reference” of (name of care home).			
<b>Resident name</b>	<b>Family member name</b>	<b>Phone *</b>	<b>E-mail *</b>

\*Optional due to privacy laws

# APPENDIX VIII INFORMATION SHARING SHEET (SAMPLE)

<b>INFORMATION SHARING SHEET</b> (name of home) Family Council Meeting			
<b>Date</b>			
<p>In signing this document I agree to have my contact information shared with the Family Council’s program. The information will be used for Family Council purposes only (e.g. for communication, record keeping and statistical purposes) and will not be sold or shared outside of the (name of care home) Family Council and the Family Council’s program.</p>			
<b>Resident name</b>	<b>Family member name</b>	<b>Phone*</b>	<b>E-mail*</b>

# APPENDIX IX MEETING PLAN (SAMPLE)

**(NAME OF FACILITY) FAMILY COUNCIL  
MEETING PLAN  
MEETINGS ARE HELD FROM (TIME) TO (TIME)**

**Teleconference Option:  
Dial in #: (?) Conference ID: (?) Personal Code: (?)**

Meeting	Topics
1. (date) a) (Issue to be discussed) b) (Education to be presented) c) (Activity to be planned) d) (Update on ??)	
2. (date) a) Follow up outstanding issues from previous meeting b) (Issue to be discussed) c) (Education to be presented) d) (Activity to be planned) e) (Update on ??)	
3. (date) a) Follow up outstanding issues from previous meeting b) (Issue to be discussed) c) (Education to be presented) d) (Activity to be planned) e) (Update on action items)	
4. (date) a) Follow up outstanding issues from previous meeting b) (Issue to be discussed) c) (Education to be presented) d) (Activity to be planned) e) (Update on ??)	
5. (date) a) Follow up outstanding issues from previous meeting b) (Issue to be discussed) c) (Education to be presented) d) (Activity to be planned) e) (Update on ??)	



# APPENDIX X MEETING INVITATION (SAMPLE)

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**YOU ARE INVITED TO BE THE DIFFERENCE**

***JOIN FAMILY COUNCIL***

**For family members of (name of home) residents**



Next meeting:

Time:

Place:

Teleconference option:  
(call in numbers)

Topics include: (list topics)

**To join or for more information call (name of contact)  
at (phone #)**

***Coffee/Tea served!***

# APPENDIX XI

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (SAMPLE)

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### FAMILY COUNCIL: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### Family Councils: Working together to promote quality of life and living



**Q:** Why have a Family Council?

**A:** Family Councils promote a supportive and collaborative forum where family members and staff can discuss successes and opportunities for improvement, and work together to provide a respectful and caring environment for the residents, families and staff that promotes quality of life and living.

**Q:** How does Family Council benefit residents?

**A:** Residents are often not able to speak up for themselves. Through Family Council, opportunities are enhanced for staff to work with families on matters affecting the resident's day-to-day living. Family Councils provide a forum for discussion and planning for events, activities and celebrations. Areas of common concern are identified that would benefit from working together to resolve.

**Q:** How does Family Council benefit family members?

**A:** Family Council benefits family members by:

- Giving you an opportunity to use your experience, skill, interests and talents to benefit all residents.
- Keeping you informed of what is going on in the facility.
- Giving you input into decisions and changes in the facility that may affect your family members.
- Enabling you to identify residents' needs that can be met through organized effort.
- Giving you opportunity to voice concerns and become informed.
- Giving you opportunity to meet other families.
- Giving you support through shared experiences with other families
- Providing education on relevant topics.

**Q:** Do residents participate in Family Council?

**A:** Although many care homes have both Resident and Family Councils, experience shows that residents and families have different needs, interests and abilities. Residents and families need their own councils for these reasons.

Family Councils and Residents Councils will keep each other informed and work together when appropriate.

**Q:** Do Family Council members volunteer in the care home?

**A:** Family Council members volunteer their time for Family Council activities which is not the same as volunteers who help in the care home and take direction from staff.

**Q:** Should Family Councils fund raise?

**A:** The purpose of a Family Council is not to fund raise however some Family Councils may choose to raise funds for specific items not covered by the care home.

**Q:** If a family member has a concern do they take it to the Family Council?

**A:** Concerns of an individual or personal nature should be addressed on a one-to-one basis with care home staff. Family Council is a forum for concerns of a general nature that affect all residents. Individual residents or situations are not discussed, respecting the privacy of resident and their families.

**Q:** Does the care home staff run the Family Council?

**A:** Family Council is run by families and friends of the care home residents. Care home staff is however available to provide support to the Family Council as requested. Each care home has a staff liaison who is the “go to” person if the Family Council requires assistance. The staff liaison or care home manager will act as Co-chair on the Family Council at the council’s request.

**Q:** How much time would I have to commit?

**A:** Family Council meets once a month for 1–2 hours. Most of the discussion and planning takes place at the meeting but members may take on added tasks that interest them. There are flexible options in participating in the Family Council including providing input through e-mail.





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