

North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN

Planning for Long-Term Care **A Practical Guide**



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What is a long-term care home?

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

A long-term care home provides:

- On-site nursing care 24 hours a day
- All meals
- Daily assistance with personal care – for example bathing, dressing and eating
- Accommodation with basic furnishings including a bed, chair and bed linens
- Laundry and housekeeping services
- Religious and spiritual services
- Personal hygiene supplies
- Someone to help you with your medication and medical and/or clinical supplies
- Social and recreational programs
- A safe and secure environment
- Some long-term care homes also provide short stay bed options such as respite and convalescent care

Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) are the placement coordinators for admissions to long-term care homes.

All long-term care homes have Residents' Councils and many also have Family Councils. Both play a role in services provided in homes and improving quality of life for residents, such as answering your questions and helping you and your loved ones as you adjust to your new surroundings. Long-term care homes are licensed by the Government of Ontario and must meet the requirements under the Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007.

How do I know when it's time to apply for long-term care?

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

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

Where do I start?

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

- Explore other housing options such as:
 - supportive housing and assisted living to help you remain supported at home as long as possible
 - retirement homes, which are privately-owned and operated facilities suitable for seniors who require minimal health care assistance.
- Assess your needs whether you are at home, elsewhere in the community, or in the hospital, and determine your eligibility for admission into a long-term care home

- Help you make an informed decision and work with you and your family to complete your application to long-term care homes
- Assess if you are eligible for home care services and, if you are eligible, develop a customized care plan that meets your needs until a long-term care bed becomes available

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

How much does it cost?

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

How do I apply to a long-term care home?

1) Referral

You can work with a LHIN care coordinator to determine whether you are eligible for admission to a long-term care home and to identify homes appropriate for you. You can refer yourself or be referred to a care coordinator by a family member, physician, nurse, or community worker. If a person is not capable of making a decision about long-term care, the substitute decision-maker (for example, the person who holds a Power of Attorney for Personal Care or certain family members) may do so on their behalf. It is a good idea to discuss the decision to apply openly and respectfully with the person for whom long-term care is being considered.

2) Visit homes you would like to consider

Visiting homes or viewing virtual tours (if available) on your LHIN or long-term care home website will help answer some of your questions. By taking a tour, you can get a better feel for the surroundings and the people who work and live in the home.

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

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

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

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

3) Assessments and forms

- When you decide that long-term care is right for you, you can work with your LHIN care coordinator to begin the application process.
- You will be asked to complete several forms as part of the application process. You or your substitute decision-maker must give consent to apply for and be admitted to a long-term care home.
- As part of the application process, your LHIN care coordinator completes assessments to determine whether you are eligible for admission, including whether your care needs can be met in a long-term care home.
- If you are found to be eligible, you may select homes anywhere in Ontario. The LHIN can place you on a maximum of five waiting lists. (This maximum does not apply to people who are assessed as needing an immediate long-stay admission because of a crisis in their condition or circumstances.)

What if I am not eligible for long-term care?

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

If you learn you are not eligible for long-term care and you disagree with the determination, we encourage you to discuss the matter with your LHIN care coordinator. If you are still not satisfied with the decision, you have the right to appeal to the provincial Health Services Appeal and Review Board:

Health Services Appeal and Review Board
9th Floor-151 Bloor Street West
Toronto ON M5S 1S4
Telephone: (416)-327-8512 or 1-866-282-2179 (toll-free)

What if I am eligible for long-term care?

Your LHIN care coordinator will notify you that you are eligible for long-term care and will send your application to the home(s) you selected. Each long-term care home will review your application to determine if the home can meet your needs.

Wait lists and wait times

Before moving into one of the long-term care homes you have selected, you will likely need to wait until an appropriate bed for your care needs becomes available. Waiting time can range from days, months or even longer depending on the type of accommodation you are waiting for and your care needs.

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

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

Waiting in hospital

The ideal place to assess your long-term care needs, and develop the best possible immediate and longer term care plan for you, is in your home. In your home your day-to-day needs can best be evaluated and understood. On some occasions, a person may need to wait in the hospital for long-term care placement. If you are in hospital while you wait, you or your caregiver may be asked to consider long-term care homes with shorter wait times so that you can receive the care you need sooner.

Patients in hospitals who are awaiting placement in a long-term care home may be required to pay a chronic care co-payment charge. The co-payment is a contribution to the cost of accommodation and meals, and is comparable to the co-payment that applies to long-term care home residents.

You can find more information about the co-payment, including rates and information about reduced payments, online at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/get-help-paying-long-term-care>.

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

Waiting at home

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

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

Bed offer

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

a) Accepting a bed offer

If you choose to accept the bed offer, you must move in within five (5) days of accepting it. The ministry cannot hold “vacant” beds due to high demand. Regardless of when you move in, you will be required to pay the accommodation cost for each of the five (5) days. If you move in on the day you receive the bed offer, you must also pay the cost for that day. If the bed that is offered to you is not your first choice, you may also choose to keep your name on the waiting list(s) for your other choice(s). Please note that your priority on the waiting list of your other choices may change when you accept a bed offer.

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

b) Refusing a bed offer

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

What if a long-term care home declines my application?

A long-term care home may decline your application for the following reasons under the Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007

The long-term care home

- does not have the physical facilities necessary to meet your care requirements
- staff at the home lack the nursing expertise to meet your care requirements

If your application is declined, the home will provide you, in writing, with the reason for declining and your LHIN care coordinator will help you look for alternatives.

If you disagree with the long-term care home's decision, you can make a complaint by calling the **Long-Term Care Home Action Line at 1-866-434-0144.**

Questions or concerns?

- If you have questions about the application process or placement into long-term care homes, contact your **LHIN care coordinator at 705-721-8010**
- Call the **Long-Term Care Home Action Line at 1-866-434-0144** to voice any concerns and complaints about long-term care homes and LHINs.
- The provincial government offers comprehensive information about long-term care at **Ontario.ca/LongTermCare.**
- For more information on the laws that govern long-term care homes, visit **ontario.ca/laws/statute/07108.**

Contact Information

For information about accommodation and costs:

Website: <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/ltc/>

For a Power of Attorney Kit:

Phone: 705-721-8010 Ext. 6641

Toll Free: 1-888-721-2222 Ext. 6641

nsmhealthline.ca

Phone: 310-2222 (no area code required)

Website: www.nsmhealthline.ca

Long-Term Care Action Line

Phone: 1-866-876-7658

Toll Free: 1-800-387-5559

The Patient Ombudsman

Phone: 1-888-321-0339

Toll Free: 1-416-597-0339

Website: www.patientombudsman.ca

Prevention of Senior Abuse Network Simcoe County

Phone: 1-866-299-1011

Website: www.psan-sc.ca

Advocacy Centre for the Elderly

Website: www.advocacycentreelderly.org/

Integrated Regional Falls Program

Phone: 1-877-665-6065

Ontario Family Council's Program

Website: www.familycouncilmembers.net

Ontario Information & Privacy Commissioner

Phone: 1-800-387-0073

Website: www.ipc.on.ca


The logo for nsmhealthline.ca features the text "nsmhealthline.ca" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. A yellow swoosh underline is positioned beneath the text, starting under "nsm" and ending under "line".

Call us any day of the week from
8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.
705-721-8010 or 1-888-721-2222

To locate health service resources in North Simcoe Muskoka
call **310-2222** (*no area code required*)
or visit

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Suite 100
Barrie, Ontario
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