

# Lisa Dawson

Patient Partner



# Leveraging Family Councils for CARE Collaborative

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&

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# Learning Objectives

1. Describe the **role and purpose** of Family Councils in Long-Term Care.
2. Identify **practical ways** to partner with Family Councils to advance improvements.

**Q1** How many of you had experience engaging with a Family Council in your LTC Home?

**Q2** How many of you are familiar with the Residential Care Regulations supporting Resident and Family Councils?

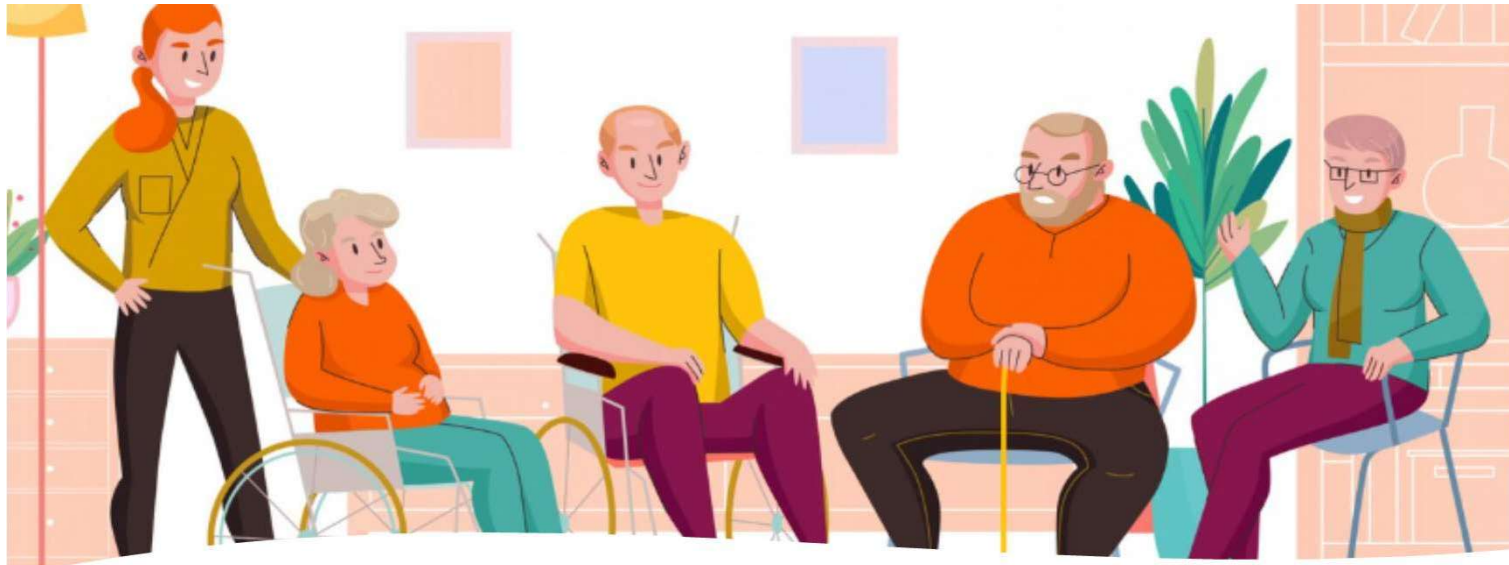
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**FAMILY COUNCIL** is a group of families, friends and/or resident representatives, who meet regularly to enhance the quality of life of residents in long-term care. Councils do this by sharing their insights, experiences, observations and brainstorming solutions about the collective needs and interests of residents.

[Family Councils](#) rely on relationship building to effectively collaborate care home leadership regarding decision-making that affects resident quality of life.





## Why Family Councils Matter

- They act as a welcoming community of support
- They offer education by inviting staff and outside experts
- They know relationship are the heart of successful conversations
- They are Supported by [Residential Care Regulations 59–59.2](#)
- They encourage engagement of stakeholders in decision-making
- They are curious and ask ‘why’ which sometimes sparks new ideas and opportunities for improvement
- They can support implementation of your key initiatives

# BENEFITS OF A FAMILY COUNCIL

## To the Long-Term Care Home Community

- More effectively crafted and implemented new policies having had input from stakeholders prior to roll out
- Councils act as a triage, providing families direct support often fixing problems before they escalate to Administration
- Provide creative solutions to problems offered alongside expressions of concern
- Family Councils can be asked to take part in committees, surveys, accreditation and quality improvement initiatives



# Leveraging Family Councils for Collaborative Care



## Leveraging Family Councils

Family Councils (FC) facilitate smooth adoption of initiatives by following specific actions

1.  
Use FC  
“spread the  
word”  
Peer to Peer  
education

2.  
Educate FC  
with “what to  
expect”  
sessions as a  
Guest  
Speaker at  
their  
meetings

3.  
Engage FC as  
a Sounding  
Board and Co-  
Creator

4.  
Embrace FC  
help to  
welcome and  
help navigate  
newcomers  
- Admission

5.  
Elevate the  
LTC voice  
through  
connection  
with Regional  
and Provincial  
Networks

## Key Action 1: Peer-to-Peer Education

- Host informal sessions to simplify complex topics
- Share easy-to-read materials

Example:

### **Demystifying GoC.**

- Make the conversation about GOC familiar so families talk to families.
- What's in it for them? Decision making in a moment of trauma made easier; setting expectations making decisions on “what matters” to the resident most.
- Reduce fears and misconceptions among families.

## Key Action 2: **Expert Engagement**

- Invite guest speakers from the care home and from community (palliative care, dementia, nutrition)
- Offer 'What to Expect' sessions
- Support initiatives like “Breaking the Outbreak: Understanding our IPAC program in LTC”

Example:

### **Workshops on Health Initiatives:**

Councils can invite health authority specialists (e.g., in nutrition, palliative care, or dementia) to speak at meetings to explain new provincial initiatives, such as the Appropriate Use of Antipsychotics (AUA) action series.

## Key Action 3: **Co-Creation & Feedback**

Schedule regular leadership team meetings with your family council

Two-way, closed loop communication

Develop together

Act as sounding board for policies

Test communication materials

Start with a small group

Provide real-time feedback from families

Example: A new dining service concept designed to serve food at the right temperature

Solicit input on an idea for initiative right from the start

## Key Action 4: **Improving Admission**

**You only have one chance to make a first impression**

- **Review your admission process:**
  - Survey all families and residents
  - What was missing or could be improved?
- **Does your pre-connection and welcome include:**
  - Checklist of items to bring with you upon admission?
  - a staff and services contact list?
  - a brochure from family & resident council?
  - a welcome and onboarding that is clinically compliant but personalizes the experience?

## Key Action 5: **Regional Associations of Family Councils and ILTCCABC**

- Ensure local family councils are encouraged to access their regional association
- Vancouver Coastal Association of Family Councils (VCAFC) meets with the VCH for regional conversations
- VCAFC attends VCH Regional Resident/Family Council Network (RRFCN)
- ILTCCABC meets with our Ministry of Health

# Examples of long-term care practices

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**Person-Centered Care:** [Health Quality BC](#) culture of compassion, prioritizing dignity and quality of life.

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**Special Care Units** working to improve outcomes

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**Integrated Care Approaches:** Palliative care, and specialized care for younger adults with complex disabilities.

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**Resident Safety:** Incident reporting, restraint use, Appropriate Use of Antipsychotics (AUA)

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**Palliative Approach:** Goals of Care, End of Life, After end of life

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**Improved Patient Experience:** For better resident satisfaction

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**LTC+: Acting on Pandemic Learning Together:** IPAC, pandemic preparedness, and family presence policies in LTC homes

# Independent Long-Term Care Councils Association BC (ILTCCABC)



## Your Local long-term care home Family Council

- Regulation 59
- Relationship Building
- Resident Quality of Life



Long-Term Care



## 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
- Member regional associations with health authorities quarterly raising systemic issues recommendations (advocacy)



# 10-Minute Team Activity

What are some ways your care home can leverage Family Councils to:

inform, engage and educate family and caregivers on improvement changes

help reinforce communication and awareness of changes and improvements over time

**Contact Us:**  
[Vancouver Coastal Association of Family Councils](#)  
VCAFC



**Contact Us:**

**Independent Long-Term Care Councils Association of BC  
(ILTCCABC)**

