

Handling moving day

This information is for you if you are caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias and you are moving them to a long-term care home. From talking to families, we know that moving the person you care for to a long-term care home may be one of the most difficult decisions you will ever have to make. This information provides you with tips to make the moving day as successful as possible.

To make the moving day as successful as possible, follow these tips:

Explain the move simply and gently to the person with dementia. Speak directly with the person by saying, for example, "We are going to a place you can stay, a place where they will call me if you need me" or "I've found a place where you will be well taken care of, where I can visit you often and make sure you have everything you need". Emphasize the positive aspects such as socializing and enjoyable activities.

The person's reaction to moving may range from anxiety and agitation to withdrawal. When you and the person with dementia arrive at the home, take some time to show them around the room and common areas of the home. To comfort the person, say and do what you feel is best. Remember to ask a staff member to accompany the person while you do the necessary paperwork.



A note about the terms we use:

- "Family" and "Caregiver" refer to anyone involved in caring for or providing support to someone with dementia.
- "Dementia" refers to Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.
- "Long-term care home" and "home" refer to a "nursing home". The terms for nursing home vary across Canada; we use "long-term care home" or "home" for easier reading.

Be sure to take care of yourself on moving day as well. Ask a family member or friend to go with you for support or plan to have someone at home when you return so you are not alone.

Try to schedule the move over a few days to give you time to prepare. Ask if you can reserve the room by paying for it before the actual moving day. Allow plenty of time for paperwork and ideally, to help decrease stress, see if you can do it before the moving day.

Note that you may experience a rollercoaster of emotions. Recognize that you are dealing with a stressful situation and that all emotions are normal. There is no right way to feel about the move. Some caregivers feel anger, grief, and embarrassment, loss of control or relief. Speak with someone you feel comfortable with to help you process your range of emotions.

Discuss with staff how you will leave the home after the move. The person with dementia may get upset when you leave so it can be helpful to think of a distraction to ease the process. Ask about recreational activities that the person can participate in.

People with dementia need support throughout the transition to a long-term care home from everyone in their support network like family and friends. To learn more about supporting the person on moving day, try the interactive and informative [e-learning module](#) created by Alzheimer Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County called Transition to Long Term Care at www.alzheimerottawa.ca/transition

Get the staff contact information. For peace of mind, after the move when you get home, consider checking with your staff contact to see how things are going.



What to Bring on Moving Day – Checklist

Item	Action	✓
Furniture	Ask the home if you can bring personal furniture	
All about me	Fill out and print a copy of <i>All about me</i> to share with the staff	
Clothing	Label clothing and make a list Check out the Packing for Moving Day list created by Alzheimer Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County	
Accessories	Bring outdoor clothing, hat, gloves, boots, umbrella, etc.	
Personal grooming	Bring all personal grooming and toiletries items (tooth brush, comb, make-up, etc.)	
Assistive devices	Bring assistive devices and batteries <ul style="list-style-type: none">• hearing aids• glasses• dentures• walker• Other	
Legal and financial documents	Bring copies of all of the completed legal and financial documents <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Power of attorney• Medical coverage• Insurance benefits	
Calendar of upcoming events	Make a calendar of upcoming events and medical appointments and update it regularly	
Medical file	List current medications and bring them in original containers Bring the most recent health assessments	
Advance care plan	Bring a copy of your family member's advance care plan (including wishes for medical interventions) Advance care directives or living will	
MedicAlert Safely Home bracelet	Ensure the MASH subscription and file are up to date	
Key contacts	Print a list of key contacts in case of an emergency	
Valuables	Do not bring any valuables (jewelry, etc.); these should be kept with family or in a safe.	
Other	Ask the home if you can bring special equipment, such as radio, TV, telephone, cell phone, etc.	

Moving day can be extremely tiring and bring a sense of loss. Contact a friend or family member if you feel you need support. The Alzheimer Society is here to help you transition through this difficult time.

Alzheimer Society



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