



## Supportive Recovery: Exit Planning

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Section 45 of the Assisted Living Regulation requires operators to develop a transition plan for a resident when they leave assisted living. The regulation sets out **'what'** needs to be included in a transition or exit plan and **'who'** is involved in its development.

### What is the purpose of exit planning and when should it be done?

Residents who come to supportive recovery typically stay in assisted living for short periods of time, depending on the residence, the programs it offers and the resident's needs. A transition or exit plan is a resident support plan for when they leave.

Leaving assisted living can be an exciting milestone; it can also present many challenges for the resident, especially if the exit is unexpected or sudden.

The factors that contributed to a resident's substance use may still be there on their return to home or community; they may be facing:

- Exposure to substance use again;
- Familiar and new stresses;
- Loss of support from an assisted living qualified staff and their peers; and
- The consequences of their previous choices.



Operators can assist individuals in transitioning out of assisted living by being proactive and:

- Providing programming (psychosocial) supports throughout their residency that equip the resident to build their skills, become self-sufficient and reintegrate into the community; and
- Engaging in exit planning as soon as the resident enters assisted living. This will create mutual expectations about exit procedures and supports available to prepare the resident as best as possible when they leave.

## **What are some of the reasons a resident may leave assisted living?**

A resident may leave assisted living when:

- They complete the supportive recovery program set up for them and are ready to take the next step;
- They are asked to leave because they are not following the rules that they agreed to in their residency agreement when they became a resident, such as using a medication that is not permitted in the residence;
- They no longer meet the criteria of assisted living, including if they:
  - › Can no longer make decisions on their own behalf;
  - › Cannot take steps to protect themselves or follow directions in an emergency;
  - › Need unscheduled professional health services on a regular basis regularly; or
  - › Behave in ways that puts at risk the health or safety of others;

- They plan to enter a more intensive substance use treatment facility; or
- They abandon the residence.

## **What does an inclusive exit plan look like?**

These are some of the key elements of an exit (or transition) plan:

- Includes the resident's contact person and who can act as support people to the resident when they leave;
- Anticipates a likely date or period when the move will happen;
- Outlines the relocation plans for the resident;
- Identifies who is responsible for making arrangements if the resident is moving to a different type of supported living arrangement;
- Identifies what supports are available for this individual when they move out, including information about housing, professional health services and social services;
- This information could be assembled as a resource kit for all residents ahead of time, with additional information added to meet the needs of each individual resident; and
- Plan is discussed thoroughly with the resident for their input.

## **What are an operator's responsibilities when a resident in supportive recovery is asked to leave?**

Section 46 of the Assisted Living Regulation recognizes that a person's residency can end unexpectedly because:

- They abandon the residence; or
- They are required to leave under the terms of the residency agreement.

In either of these cases, the operator needs to:

- Notify the person's contact person and case manager, if any, so they are aware of the exit;
- Provide the resident with information about housing options, professional health services and social services;
- Supply a personal Naloxone kit if the person is at risk of experiencing an opioid overdose; and
- Make a record of the event and the actions taken.

It may not always be reasonable or practical to provide each of these supports, especially if the resident abandons the residence without letting you know. Overall, you hold a responsibility to each individual, to promote their independence and well-being and be responsive to their needs, capabilities and preferences. Your work in supportive recovery is about creating a safe space for residents and helping each resident gain the confidence and skills they need to return to the community, which includes making an effort to provide as much support as possible when a client leaves your residence.

***Be sure to review the Assisted Living Regulation to become familiar with all of your responsibilities in operating an assisted living residence.***

- See Assisted Living in BC, [www.gov.bc.ca/AssistedLivingBC](http://www.gov.bc.ca/AssistedLivingBC) / Opening or Operating an Assisted Living Residence / Tools and Resources.