Executive Summary: External Review of the Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) Home Share Program

Extract from the Review Report | 13 November 2025

Context

This review was commissioned by the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (MSDPR) in British Columbia (BC) in May 2025. Tamar Consultancy Pty Ltd was contracted to conduct the review and a deeply experienced external team comprised Eddie Bartnik (Principal Consultant, Tamar) and sub-contractors Prof Tim Stainton (Review Co-Lead), Aisling Blackmore (Secretariat and Researcher) and Ramona Sharma (Researcher).

The purpose of the review was to investigate safety and quality in BC's Home Share arrangements, by completing a review of:

- standards that promote quality of life and safety in home-share arrangements, and
- accountability and service quality oversight measures

The review recommendations identify changes which will further improve the safety and quality of Home Share beyond what has been or is currently being implemented. At the time of writing, approximately 4,300 people are funded to live in Home Share by Community Living British Columbia (CLBC).

The considerations noted below help to inform the interpretation of the information and contributions we received and the final recommendations:

- Balancing the rights of each individual to privacy, autonomy, dignity of risk, and self-determination with the obligations of government and service providers to ensure safety and quality (especially reinforced by the Advisory Committee).
- How consistently practices are implemented in different locations.
- Where obligations appropriately sit across the service system and government departments.
- The role of informal safeguards (family, friends, and unpaid relationships with fellow citizens) alongside formal safeguarding mechanisms and practices.
- The need to carefully consider the wider system within which Home Share operates and the interaction between overall systems pressures and Home Share program safety and quality over a longer period.

Methodology

The review gathered information from a wide range of sources, including:

- an independent Advisory Committee with self-advocate, family, Home Share Provider, and community services representatives,
- briefings from key CLBC staff and senior service delivery leaders,
- review of internal CLBC and external key documents,
- research into policy and practices in other jurisdictions,
- public email submission line,
- targeted interviews.

The aims of the methodology were to achieve shared understanding of the problems, input into the drafting and priority of recommendations and a set of recommendations that are at the right level, well directed, timely and able to be implemented.

The review process was conducted over four key stages.

- Establishment and information gathering: seeking information from a wide range of stakeholders to understand Home Share experiences from a wide range of perspectives.
- Information consolidation and analysis: bringing together all the information and developing Key Directions.
- Testing Key Directions and initial recommendations: two rounds of separate and independent feedback with Advisory Committee members and CLBC staff to consider recommendations and identify priorities.
- Reporting: Draft report submitted and reviewed by stakeholders ahead of finalisation.

Key system pressures impacting on Home Share

Home Share in British Columbia is unique in that institutions have been closed for some time and Home Share is the largest community living option – a situation that doesn't exist in any other jurisdiction. A consistent view is that it has become the default option, rather than an option of first choice and that there are often limited alternatives. It is also clear that individual planning has been weakened over the years as a facilitator of strong individual choice and is split between CLBC and the Home Share Coordinators.

There are substantial numbers of additional people seeking community living /Home Share (some 775 on the Request for Service list as at June 30, 2025, and a further 238 on the Planning Registry) with considerable pressure on the system to find "beds" and significant, deep community concerns with sustainability of the current Home Share program as the primary growth strategy going forward. A further 19,231 adults are living outside of CLBC's funded residential supports and services indicating considerable long-term demand.

The review found that CLBC and key partners in the sector (such as the Home Sharing Support Society of BC and BC CEO Network) have worked extremely hard to make improvements to safety and quality in the period following the death of Florence Girard in 2018. CLBC in October 2025 produced a comprehensive "Progress report: CLBC Home Sharing program and policy improvements from 2019 to 2025" which is at Attachment 2 to this report. A solid body of work

is underway and CLBC provided the review with open and comprehensive briefings and information.

Despite this body of work, there was consistent feedback that the Home Share program and CLBC itself continues to be under considerable stress and further urgent improvements are needed. The following quotes are examples:

"The policies and checklists in place are fine – don't need more paperwork.... People aren't just asking for more rules – they're asking for better support, stronger relationships, and real accountability. They want a system that sees the whole person, not just a file or a funding category."

Advisory Committee member submission

"However, we remain deeply concerned about the sustainability of Shared Living and the erosion of a strong relational focus being replaced with a transactional one."

BC CEO Network submission

We considered it essential to place the current system pressures into the overall historical context of delivery of Home Share and disability services in British Columbia through CLBC. Key contextual points outlined in Section 3 include:

- Erosion of robust individual planning, coordination and review
- Changes to the population served by CLBC and covered by the Guide to Support Allocation (GSA)
- Scope creep for CLBC services, including allied services such as health, mental health, housing, corrections
- Sufficiency of CLBC Budget
- Home Share Coordinating Agencies
- Home Share Providers

Key findings

BC has been a world-leader in developing the Home Share model and where Home Share is done well, it is highly valued. Development of robust Home Share systems and options as a quality alternative to institutions and group homes is an ongoing priority project in several comparable jurisdictions. CLBC and key sector partners have worked diligently to make improvements over recent years.

The CLBC *Standards for Home Sharing* and *Standards for the Coordination of Home Sharing* are in line with evidence-based good practice from other jurisdictions. But there needs to be adequate resourcing to ensure these are consistently implemented, monitored and enforced. Greater transparency and public reporting of both safety and quality in Home Share and quality of life outcomes for people supported in Home Share is needed to support accountability and build trust.

Consistent reports are that Home Share has become the default community living option provided through CLBC funding. There are limited alternative options available, and evidence of considerable long-term demand for community living support. It is unlikely Home Share alone can be scaled to accommodate demand.

Key features of the Home Share model have been weakened over time. Namely: individualized planning, coordination and review; matching process between Home Sharers; and the involvement (or development of) of key relationships and informal community supports. The evidence base indicates these features are key to ensuring stable, safe, and successful Home Share arrangements.

Contextual factors have changed over time, including: the population served by CLBC has changed significantly and people with more complex lives are being matched to Home Share; considerable demand and overall sufficiency of the CLBC budget, loss of other allied and community supports; and wider systems pressures such as increasing cost of living and housing scarcity.

Turnover of staff and Home Share providers in all key roles is a major concern, leading to loss of experience and knowledge and increasing risk and vulnerability.

System pressures create vulnerabilities for people in Home Share and need to be stabilized.

As stated in our report:

"Even the best of monitoring and safeguards cannot protect against vulnerabilities created by an underfunded system." p.23

Recommendations

The approach taken has been to have a primary focus on Standards and Monitoring as the core focus of the review, but also to identify the four other key system factors that significantly contribute to risk and the need for improvement in Home Share.

These Key Directions are:

1. Standards, Safety and Quality of Life, Monitoring and Oversight
2. Individual Planning, Coordination and Review
3. Key Roles, Qualifications, Training and Supervision
4. Community Living Options
5. Broader Structural Issues

MSDPR advised that while Home Share provider compensation is outside of the Review scope (e.g. how much should a Home Share provider be paid), funding decisions impacting safety, quality of life, or oversight can be considered in scope (e.g. does Home Share provider compensation support a safe environment with strong quality of life outcomes).

The Key Directions workshop process involved the progressive development and refinement of key content for each Key Direction:

- Why this is a key direction
- Work completed or underway
- The gap

These are the building blocks needed to develop quality of life, safety, and accountability in the Home Share system. These building blocks are mutually reinforcing but cannot be effective in

isolation. Implementation will need to take place over a multi-year period, involving a range of agencies and stakeholders, and with equal attention to each key direction.

Underneath the Key Directions are 29 recommendations to guide specific implementation actions, each of which are described in terms of priority, timeline and responsibility:

1. Standards, Safety and Quality of Life, Monitoring and Oversight (10 recommendations)
2. Individual Planning, Coordination and Review (8 recommendations)
3. Key Roles, Qualifications, Training and Supervision (5 recommendations)
4. Community Living Options (3 recommendations)
5. Broader Structural Issues (3 recommendations)

The complete list of recommendations is provided at Attachment 3 to the main report.

Conclusion

This report presents an urgent call for action and clear roadmap for improvements. The report clarifies the fundamentals needed for a safe, sustainable, good quality Home Share system that supports good lives for everyone involved.