



About *Just for Families*

Just for Families is a series of informational brochures developed by the Inglewood Family Advisory Committee and published by Inglewood Care Centre. We believe family members are valuable members of Inglewood's care team. By better understanding aging, medical concerns and other issues affecting the residents, families can work with staff to ensure residents receive the highest quality of care.

Our thanks to:

☞ The families and staff who contributed to the content

☞ 'Homes for the Aged' Division, City of Toronto, for inspiring this series as well as some text for this brochure

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Just for Families

Ways that Families Make a Difference at Inglewood

Number one tip!

Do let Inglewood know if you have a concern.

- 1 Families sometimes worry that if they speak up, their family member will receive less care. This is not true.

Visit your family as much as possible.

- 2 Even if a resident may no longer know *who* someone is, they know whom they love—and who loves them.

Visiting your family member?

- 3 Add just five minutes before or after your visit, to sit and chat with someone else. Not all our residents have visitors.

Get to know all the care staff who take care of your family member.

- 4 Visit different days and times to cover each changing shift. This not only helps care staff to get a more complete picture of the resident, but it helps you to appreciate and evaluate the levels of care that your family receives. Greatest benefit? We become an extended family.

Display family pictures in the resident's room.

- 5 Familiar photos can be comforting. Do include early photos of the resident—people with dementia are more likely to recognize themselves when they were younger.

Bring your people-friendly pets to visit.

- 6 Most residents love animals.

Going out of town?

- 7 If they know you are away, other visitors in the same area will make a point of chatting with your family member. You can repay the favour.

Does your family member need assistance eating?

- 8 Contact the Volunteer Coordinator and view our helpful video on eating assistance. Then come at lunch or suppertime to assist.

Ask musical friends to drop in with their instruments and play.

- 9 One family member drew a happy crowd while playing the accordion for his wife in the garden.

Bring favourite food treats for your family member.

- 10 NOTE: All food left for residents must have a throw-away date on them, so care staff can dispose of food if required. Let staff know if the resident needs help to find or eat these treats—they'll be happy to help.

Bring in ice cream and cones to share with other residents (after checking dietary restrictions with staff).

- 11 IMPORTANT! Before you bring in food to share with other residents (non-family), you MUST contact our dietician a day or so ahead so she can confirm the food to be "non-potentially hazardous." These are *Environmental Health guidelines*. For example: *yes* to brownies, *no* to whipped cream.

Make a storyboard for the resident's room.

12 Use photographs and words to tell your family member's life story. It's a great starting point for conversation by staff and other visitors.

Bring in old and new videos.

13 Ask the recreation staff for popular choices in commercial videos (musicals, etc.)—and don't forget your own home movies!

Creative?

14 Ask recreation therapists how you might involve residents with art programs.

Garden with your family member.

15 Help yourselves to tools in the Friendship Garden's shed (ask staff if the door is locked). Sweeping and raking leaves are familiar and pleasing tasks for many. The old-fashioned mower is a dream to push and the *clickety-clack* holds many memories. Residents also enjoy watching others work, especially if you ask for their advice.

Love to dance?

16 Our recreation therapists always need dancing partners (male and female). It's a great way to encourage residents to get up and move to music. Did you know dancing is one of the best ways to exercise our brains?

Depression can hit anyone.

17 An outing by bus is a real upper. Offer to come along as a volunteer and a companion for your family member, especially if they are hesitant to go.

Donate those free bulb coupons.

18 Most North Shore nurseries hand out 5 *free bulb* coupons at summer's end. Donate them to Inglewood and we'll plant bulbs to brighten their gardens, patios and containers.

Offer to bring fresh cut flowers for one of Inglewood's public spaces.

19 Recreation staff will show you where the vases are kept. Ask residents to help you arrange flowers.

Please donate items for Inglewood's yearly events.

20 Our bazaars and raffles support the Residents Council projects. Home baking and silent auction items are especially welcome for the Christmas bazaar.

New to Inglewood?

21 Buddy up. Ask staff or the Family Advisory Committee members for the name of a family in a similar situation (same area, with spouse or parent, etc.), but who has been here longer.

Interested in advocating for all residents?

22 Please contact the Inglewood Family Advisory Committee through Reception in the Lodge. We welcome new members.

With the resident's permission, check clothing.

23 Some items may need to be altered or mended, shirts may need buttons replaced. Store seasonal clothing at home to avoid confusion and crammed closets.

Ask care aides for their advice.

24 Would your family member now benefit from different types of clothing? For example: skirts or pants with elastic waistbands instead of frustrating buttons, or Velcro fastening shoes instead of shoelaces.

Let care aides know what gives your family member pleasure.

25 By learning to tie a resident's beautiful scarves in interesting ways, one care aide developed a special bond of trust with her resident.

Worried about favourite possessions or clothing going missing?

26 Take photographs first, and order a double set of prints. Then post a photograph of the item at the nursing station or laundry. It's so much easier for staff to find. Label everything of value to you.

Mealtime in a resident's room?

27 Make mealtime more 'homey' by covering the mobile meal tray with a pretty tablecloth; add a flower, some personal tableware, and share dinner together. Music, perhaps? Now, share a toast... Eating together makes such a difference.

Put up seasonal decorations.

28 Decorate in residents' rooms, as well as on their doors. It means a lot to them. Again, it's a good starting point for a conversation.

Attend family education nights.

29 It's a good way to share ideas, ask questions and meet other family members.

Look after you, too. Don't feel guilty.

30 You are doing the best you can. Don't feel like coming to visit one day? Stay home. Your next visit will be that much more enjoyable. You can always phone the nursing station to ask how your family member is doing, or to speak with him or her.

Share your own tips on how family members can make a difference.

31 Please leave suggestions at Reception in the Lodge, attention: Family Advisory Committee.

Remember:

What residents need is the same as all of us—something to do, someone to love, something to look forward to.