



APPENDIX A: Key Questions

A Resource for Individuals, Families, and CLBC Staff

Below are sample questions and two summary lists about things to be aware of when visiting service provider premises that outline some topics that might be important to individuals and/or their family members when exploring potential service providers. Sample questions are loosely grouped into 8 areas that reflect Community Living BC's commitment to a Quality of Life framework. Learn more about quality of life by visiting www.communitylivingbc.ca/individuals-families/quality-of-life/.

NOTE: We are not suggesting that you go through this entire set of questions, one-by-one, with potential service providers. Instead, this sample sheet is meant to be a reference tool that helps you get clear answers on issues that may be important to you and/or your family member. For ease of reading, we use son/daughter/sister/brother interchangeably.

INDEPENDENCE

Personal Development

- 1) How will you help my son learn about things he is interested in?
- 2) How will you help my daughter become more independent?
- 3) How will you support my brother to do the things he enjoys and that are important to him?

Self-Determination

- 1) How will you support my sister to make her own choices (what to wear, what to eat, what to do in her free time, etc.)?
- 2) How much choice will my son have about what he does and who he spends his time with?
- 3) How much control will my daughter have over who works with her?

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Interpersonal Relationships

- 1) How will you support my brother to maintain his relationships with his family and friends?
- 2) How will you support my sister to meet new people? Including those who do not have a disability?
- 3) Who can my son go to if he needs help with something?

Social Inclusion

- 1) How will you support my daughter to join clubs and groups that reflect her interests?
- 2) How will you support my brother to contribute to his community and help others?
- 3) How will you help my sister stay involved with the activities, organizations, and clubs that are already an important part of her life?

Rights

- 1) How will you ensure that my son has privacy?
- 2) What can my daughter do if she doesn't like the way someone is treating her?
- 3) How will you help my brother understand his rights?
- 4) What can my sister do if she feels someone is not asking for her opinion about things that matter to her or if someone has made a decision that she doesn't like?

WELL-BEING

Emotional Well-Being

- 1) What will you do to make sure that my son feels safe?
- 2) How will you support my daughter to be around people that make her feel good about herself?
- 3) How will you let my brother know that he is doing a good job?

Physical Well-Being

- 1) How will you ensure that my sister is getting the medical attention that she needs (seeing a doctor, seeing a dentist, seeing specialists, etc.) and that the people who support her will know about her needs?
- 2) Will my son have the opportunity to make choices about how active he wants to be?
- 3) How will you support my daughter to be as healthy as possible?

Material Well-Being

- 1) How will you support my brother to pay for things that are important to him?
- 2) How much control will my sister have over how her money is spent?
- 3) What will you do to make sure that my son's possessions are safe and available for him to use?

SUMMARY LIST OF THINGS TO BE AWARE OF – HOME

- On a tour, ask yourself whose home is it? Does the home have a comfortable, lived-in appearance or does it look impersonal, like a hotel room? Who does the decorating? Staff or people who live in the home? Do you see personal effects such as trophies, diplomas, or family photos on display in the common living areas?
- Does the home have the equipment that my family member will need? For example, can a person in a wheelchair reach door handles and drawer knobs and everyday tools such as a pots and pans?
- Does everyone follow the same schedule (mealtimes, bedtimes, etc.) or are there opportunities for individuals to establish routines that fit their own needs and preferences?
- If my family member needs support with personal care, how will new staff be introduced and oriented? What about support with behaviour or medical needs?
- How are common areas set up and accessed?
- Is it run more like a business than a home? Signs to watch for include rules posted on walls as if this was a public building, prime space taken up for office equipment, and unreasonable restrictions on the free movement of those who live in the home.
- Most importantly, how does my family member respond to the environment? How do I feel when spending time in the home? Was there a good first impression with potential roommates? Will the service provider/agency allow several visits for my family member and me to decide?

SUMMARY LIST OF THINGS TO BE AWARE OF – COMMUNITY INCLUSION

- On a tour, ask yourself is the place of service a comfortable space? Is the space bright, cheerful, and welcoming? Do the participants you meet seem happy and well-supported?
- Does the service provider have experience supporting individuals with needs that are similar to those of my family member?
- How much time is actually spent in community and what does this look like? Do people go out together in large groups or are daily/weekly schedules customized to meet the needs/preferences of individual participants?
- How much control will my family member have over the kinds of activities in which he/she participates?
- Is there a focus on increasing independence and exploring employment opportunities?
- What happens if my family member is not able (for whatever reason ... illness, anxiety, etc.) to participate in an activity that has been planned?
- Most importantly, how does my family member respond to the environment? How do I feel in when spending time in the space?
- Will the service provider/agency allow several visits for my family member and me to decide?

NOTE: Many of the questions in the summary lists above have been taken and/or adapted from the Central Alberta Family Networks publication *Only the Best Will Do*. The full guide it can be found at the link below:

www.seniors.alberta.ca/PDD/Central/Docs/Only_the_Best_Will_Do.pdf