

Community Living Options for individuals residing at Manitoba Developmental Centre



This guide was developed by the Manitoba government and Community Living Manitoba to help residents, their families, and substitute decision makers learn about community living options.

What is community living?

The words 'Community Living' reflect the growing understanding that the right to live a fully integrated life within the community – to live, to go to school, to work, to enjoy recreation and to be active in retirement – belongs to all.

Individuals residing at MDC have several options for supported living to consider:

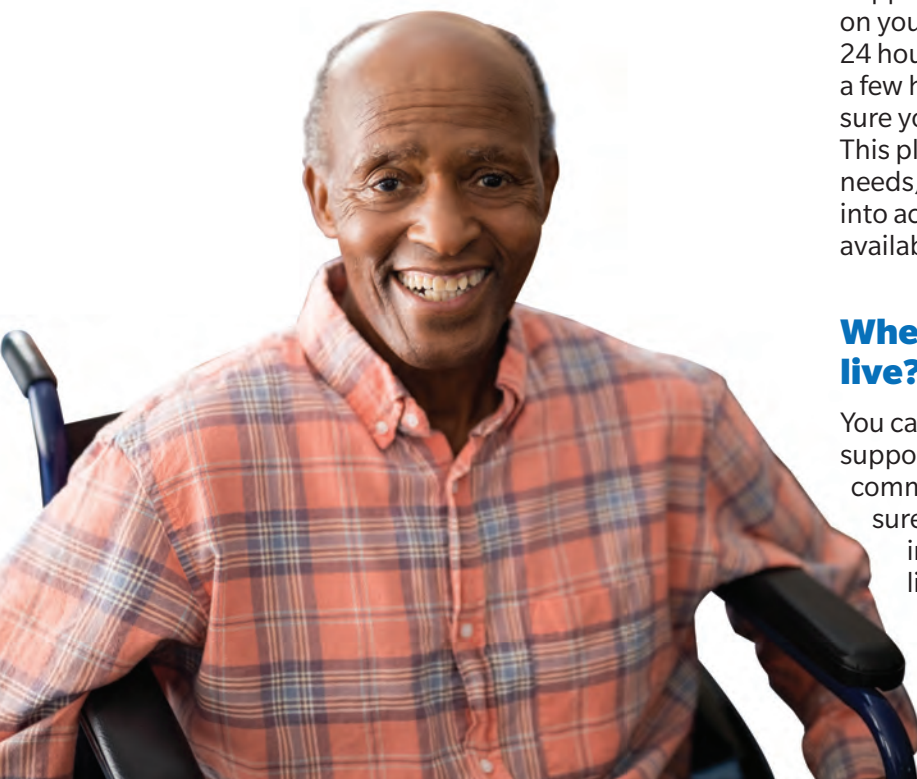
- **You may live in a home in the community that is run by a service agency and licensed by the Manitoba government.** Usually, you live with other roommates in these homes. Your services and supports are provided by the agency.
- **You may share a home with a family who agrees to provide support for you.** These homes are also licensed by the government. You may live with other roommates in this home.

- **During the day** you may be involved with an employment or day program. Here, you will be supported to either work in the community, volunteer at a site where you help others, or do activities, outings, games, and crafts that you find interesting. You may also participate in the tasks of everyday life like cooking, laundry, keeping your home, mowing grass, getting groceries, and so on.
- **You may be part of *In the Company of Friends* program.** In this program, you receive money directly to meet your daily living and support staff needs. With the help of family and friends, you make decisions about how to spend your money, and how to plan for your needs and wishes.
- **You may live on your own with supports.** Your services and supports are provided by an agency. Some people even own the home they live in.

Support is provided in these living situations based on your individual needs. Some people might need 24 hour support. Some people might only need a few hours a week. Planning is needed to make sure your move into the community is successful. This planning takes into account your individual needs, and your likes and dislikes. It also takes into account the supports and services that are available.

Where in Manitoba can I choose to live?

You can choose where you live, as long as the support and services you need are available in that community. A lot of planning is needed to make sure you have what you need. Everyone involved in helping you move will work hard to help you live in the community you choose. The goal is to make sure you live in a safe, well supported environment.



What is it like living in the community?

Living in the community is different for each person. It usually includes being part of community life. This means doing everyday things like shopping, banking, doing leisure activities, going for coffee, and visiting neighbours and friends. It also means having choices and having new and different experiences. You will have your own bedroom and may share your home with a few roommates.

Many people say that being connected to a community makes them feel happy and valued. How much you take part in the community depends on your interests and what is available. The planning process will identify some of your choices. These can include new activities and experiences.

It's important to understand that it can take you a little time to adjust to moving to a new community. Some people know what they like, while others are not quite as sure. Your adjustment time may also depend on the people who are in your new community. It will also depend on your level of motivation or interest.

Can I still see my friends from MDC?

Over your years at MDC, you may have built strong friendships with other residents and with staff. These are important connections in your life. During the planning process it is important that you (or your family and staff) let everyone know who you want to remain in contact with once you have left MDC. There are many ways to stay in touch, you can arrange for a visit or a coffee, stay in touch over the phone, send emails to your friends, stay in touch over Facebook, or perhaps even Zoom with your friends. Your staff from MDC may need to decide how much they will be able to

stay in touch and they can let you know about this. The staff in your new home will assist you to stay in touch with your friends from MDC.

What are the steps in moving into a community?

Planning is key to feeling comfortable about your move to the community. You will have a planning team, and you and your team will have meetings to make sure that everything goes smoothly. The planning starts by getting you together with other people. This includes, the people who know you best, the people who know the community and the people who will help you make good decisions. This usually includes the following people:

- your family
- your substitute decision maker
- the MDC care team
- Department of Families staff
- community agency staff





Your health, support needs, family connections, likes, dislikes and wishes are all considered. You and your family usually visit places where you might want to live. The planning team looks at the resources available for you within that community. This can include access to medical people and support agencies. MDC staff will share information about you with the planning team. This will help identify and deal with any issues.

When it is close to moving time, you will probably visit the actual home where you will live. This could be a short visit at first. Then it could be longer visits and maybe even staying for a few days to see how it works. A lot of care and work goes into making sure your move into a new community succeeds.

How have other Individuals residing at MDC done when they moved into a new community?

Most individuals who have moved into a community setting have had a good experience. Each transition is different because each person and their needs are unique. Your family will normally be a big part

of your move. They can ask questions and give their opinions during the planning time. Before you move, you will meet with your roommates and any agency and support staff who are going to help you, so you can get to know them. All these things help make your move easier.

What happens if there are problems when I move?

Moving into a community is definitely a change for you. Not everything will happen as you expect. If this happens, your team will meet and try to help sort it out. They will review and adjust your plan regularly to make everything run as smoothly as possible.



In their own words...

Here are some comments from people who moved from MDC into community living

I did not have many friends at MDC. When I moved to a house, I found that I can be a very good neighbour. I am friends with my neighbours and the staff. I get to go for lots of bike rides. I used to miss my family, but now I can go home and visit. I moved to a peaceful neighbourhood and I am having fun. I play baseball, ride bikes and go bowling whenever I want to.

A former resident of MDC

When leaving MDC, I was told that I would be moving to a big house in the country with a friend that I knew from workshop number two. This made me feel good. I like having a roommate. I like living in a house because I can get out more. I now go shopping with my staff and go for coffee almost every day. I wanted to get a job, but had a hard time finding work that I liked. This year I am in charge of looking after a big garden. This makes me feel important.

A former resident of MDC

This is part of another letter from a former resident.

Hi,

I like the community, and the people are nice to me. I am living in a big house, it's nice. The residents here are my friends; soon I will be going to the workshop with them. They have a cat here that likes to lie beside me in bed and keep me warm. I went to see Doc Walker here, they were good. I've been on shopping trips for ice cream and some things for my room. I like my new room. We are going to get a bookshelf to put in my room. I am learning to do my own laundry.

I try and go to the mail everyday to see if I got any mail. I go for milkshakes, chips and drinks when I want to. We go for coffee at the cafe and out for supper. Sometimes we order food into the house from the restaurant. I am trying to make my own meals – I make good sandwiches!

For Thanksgiving, I hope we have a big turkey heated in the oven with cranberry sauce to share with everyone. My birthday is coming up. I hope to have balloons, ice cream cake, and lots of presents.

Hope you are well.

A former resident of MDC



Sometimes it takes a while to get used to a new home. Here is what an agency staff member had to say about an individual who recently moved to community living.

At the Manitoba Developmental Centre, the man we now support lived in a cottage with 25 other individuals. He participated in some recreational activities that included bowling and swimming. He loved to go to camp and watch Portage Terrier hockey games.

After several transition visits, lasting anywhere from a few hours to overnight, he moved into the home in the community. He now lives with three other men. He can be seen out and about in the community grocery shopping, picking up his mail, or enjoying a leisurely coffee in one of the restaurants. He understands the agency's pictorial calendar system where he can choose what activities he wants to participate in. He enjoys

attending local ball games, hockey games and waving to passersby.

He is growing in his independence. We can count on him to set and clear the dishes from the table or take out the recycling. He has his own cooking night where once per week staff help him make supper for everyone. He participates in our papermaking program and enjoys engaging with the members of his team.

He has adjusted very well to his new environment and gets along well with everyone. He is more flexible now than when he first moved to the agency, as he has overcome some of his initial hesitation. He is a gentle, happy, fun-loving man and our agency is blessed to have him choose to live with us.



For Family and Friends of Individuals Residing at MDC



How do agencies make community homes safe?

There is an adage in community living, that people with disabilities are safest when they have a broad range of people who know them and care about them. Services that operate in the community are subject to a lot of oversight, from neighbours, from family and friends, from other service providers, from transportation providers, and from government. As well, community agencies have rules and procedures to keep people safe. Resident health, safety and well-being are always the most important considerations.

Every person supported through Community Living disAbility Services has a Community Services Worker or an Agency Case Worker. Should abuse or neglect occur it is reported to this department. Direct Support Workers (DSW), the name typically used to describe people who provide support in community settings, must have a clear Criminal Record check and Adult Abuse Record check.

Agencies work hard to ensure staff are trained; that staff understand how to recognize neglect and abuse; and that they know how to report it to Manitoba government staff.

How much training do community living staff have? Are they as well trained as MDC staff?

There is a variety of skill development training for DSWs. For example, agencies provide orientation training, and Abilities Manitoba, Inclusion Winnipeg, Manitoba Supported Employment Network, and others provide relevant training opportunities. Also, DSWs may be graduates of the Disability and Community Support program at Red River College, the Disability Studies program at the University of Winnipeg, or Social Work and Arts programs at the Universities of Manitoba and Brandon. In addition, agency staff get on-the-job training and specific training to support an individual's needs.

Community agencies match staff and clients as closely as possible so that people have the supports they need. In situations where someone moving from MDC needs specific support, the agency will make sure the staff are trained to provide it. Training and support to meet the behavioural needs of individuals are also available in community living settings.

What kind of policies and supervision are there in a home run by an agency?

Each home is licensed by the Manitoba government. Community living homes are regulated by The Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability Act, The Social Services Administration Act, and their regulations, as well as all the guidelines in the Residential Care Licensing Manual.

Each home has different kinds of supervision, based on the needs of the people who live there. Some people do not need much supervision, while others need one-on-one support all the time.

Will my family member have access to all the services and activities that are available at MDC if he or she moves into a community living home?

Clinical and medical services, like speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and medical appointments, are arranged in the community before the resident moves into the community. The services available in the community sometimes depend on where the person chooses to live. Your family member may find that they have more choice when they are picking the services that they require. These decisions are addressed during the planning meetings.

We've tried community placements before and they didn't work. What would be different this time?

In the past, planning may not have been as thorough as it is now. Processes are in place to ensure that planning is as complete as needed to make the best transition possible. There is a greater understanding of emotional needs, not just the physical adjustments of moving. Staying connected to people they have known is important. For example, there is a focus on relationships and ensuring people are not experiencing loneliness. Plans are more holistic and roommates are better matched.

The planning team will use your family member's past experiences to build a better transition plan and support system.

I think my family member's needs might be too high to be addressed in the community. How do I know he or she will be well taken care of?

There are a variety of people who live in the community with a range of support needs. There is probably someone living in the community who has similar needs to your family member. It might be helpful to talk to and visit other people who have similar support needs.

Also, there are community outreach programs available to address these concerns. As part of transition planning, your family member's needs will be fully assessed and he or she will only make the move when those needs can be met in a community setting.

I'm a Substitute Decision Maker for a resident. How will my role change if he or she moves into the community?

You will still be responsible for making decisions based on his or her wishes. This will not change. What may change are the choices and options you have in making decisions on his or her behalf.

Who will look after my loved one in the future if there is no family to act as a substitute decision maker?

The Public Guardian and Trustee acts as the substitute decision maker for vulnerable adults who have no family, friends, or advocate to act for them. That is the case whether or not the individual resides at MDC or in the community.

What if the community placement doesn't work out?

Every effort will be made to ensure that your family member will be comfortable in their new home in the community. If it becomes apparent that the initial setting is not working and the person is unusually stressed and upset, then there are other service models in the community that can be tried. Finding a good match between the agency and your family member is very important. During the planning process it is key that you, and others who know your family member well, share as much information as possible about what will make a successful match.

What transportation support is available so that people can take part in activities in the community?

For people living in a licensed home, transportation is provided by the agency. Transportation is one of the topics dealt with during the planning stages, to ensure the person can get to medical and other appointments, to work and social outings. This may include using an agency van, HandiTransit or public transit. If someone has special transportation needs, they will be considered when identifying possible placements, to make sure suitable transportation is available.

How do people access special resources in the community, like speech and language services, physical therapy, recreation therapy, etc.?

When someone moves to a community setting they may be assigned a Community Service Worker through Community Living disAbility Services or an Agency Case Worker. This person, or the person's doctor, can make a referral for special services and many of the community living agencies also provide them. If someone needs special services, the planning team makes sure access to the services is set up before the move.

The staff at MDC know how to work with my family member. How will all that experience be shared with a new agency?

Staff at the new agency will spend time with your family member while he or she still lives at MDC and they'll also spend time with the MDC staff who know your family member best. MDC staff will also go to the new home and give information to the new staff. There will be as many transition visits as necessary before the move. After the move, information about your family member will be kept by the Community Services Worker /Agency Case Worker. This person will be a resource if there are questions about your family member's care history while they were at MDC.

I am a family member. Can I talk to other families who have gone through this process?

If you want to talk to other families and individuals who have moved into the community, contact staff in the eastern region or a Clinical Coordinator at MDC to discuss your questions and concerns. Many services and agencies in the community have their roots in the work that was done by families. Community Living Manitoba, Inclusion Winnipeg, and the Family Advocacy Network, are organizations with this history. Also, the agency that is planning to support your family member, may be able to connect you with parents and siblings of others that they support. Contact information is listed on the back of this brochure.



For more information, contact staff at one of these locations:

Community Living Manitoba

6 – 120 Maryland Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3G 1L1
Phone: 204-786-1607
Fax: 204-789-9850
Email: aclmb@aclmb.ca

Family Advocacy Network

Email: Families.Caregivers@gmail.com

The Department of Families – Eastern Region

25 Tupper Street North
Portage la Prairie, Manitoba
R1N 3K1
Phone: 204-239-3092
Toll free: 1-866-513-2185
Fax: 204-239-3198

For other locations in Manitoba, go to:

www.manitoba.ca/fs; click on **Service Locations**

This link will show you all of the **Community Living disAbility Service** agencies operating in Manitoba:
Province of Manitoba | fs - Additional Links (gov.mb.ca)

Manitoba Developmental Centre

840 – 3rd Street N.E.
Portage la Prairie, Manitoba
R1N 3C6
Phone: 204-856-4200

People First of Canada

20–226 Osborne St. North
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3C 1V4
Canada
Phone: 204.784.7362
Fax: 204.784.7364

To learn more about self advocacy opportunities and resources available that support the rights of individuals with intellectual disabilities, please follow the links:
<https://www.peoplefirstofcanada.ca/>
<https://www.facebook.com/peoplefirstmanitoba/>
People First of Manitoba - Home | Facebook

To learn more about all of the Community Living Associations in your area please follow this link:
Community Living Manitoba - Community Living Manitoba Associations
(aclmb.ca)