

CanAge's CANOE Model

Best practices for safely visiting loved ones in Long-Term Care

The **CANOE model** encompasses a process for safe visits to long-term care residences and establishes a balanced approach for residents, staff, and visitors to connect in-person after Covid-19 regulations have been lifted. Engagement with friends, family, and loved ones is a valued aspect to quality of life and helps to mitigate feelings of loneliness and social isolation. Emotional well-being is essential to residents' overall health and is at the forefront of our care response when considering needs. Visiting is beneficial to all parties involved and equitable access is important to consider for all visitors. A balanced approach and physical distance are required to properly ensure infection control standards are enforced while also maintaining the safety of residents in long-term care, staff and visitors. These aspects for safe visits are highlighted in the acronym CANOE.



Café Style Communal Spaces

A café style visit encourages residents and visitors to safely physically distance with coffee and tea in disposable cups served by the residence staff. Visitors must book a reservation with the long-term care residence prior to their arrival. The layout can resemble a café with allocated space to allow for physical distancing. Reformatting gathering spaces using this design encourages individuals to connect with one another and engage with their community. Long-term care residences can call on their trained volunteers to communicate between visitors and staff to support this visiting initiative.



Activity Boxes

Activity boxes can be used during visits to engage in new conversations between visitors and residents. Visitors and residents can choose the type of activity they wish to engage in to allow for new content and interest upon each visit, which can help build meaningful connections. Activity boxes can be used as a safe alternative to shared items often found in long-term care. They can include items that can easily be disinfected after each use to ensure the safety of visitors and residents. Activity boxes can be centred around specific themes that might spark interest for residents living in long-term care. For example, an activity box might include tools, materials, and items focused around gardening. Another example is one that is centred around history, including laminated articles or photos of historical events such as "on this day in history."



Navigating New Ways of Connecting

Visitors and residents need to find creative ways to connect while practicing safety guidelines. Social engagement is key to everyone's overall health. This includes a sense of autonomy and dignity, the opportunity for relationship building, having a valued social identity, offering a sense of comfort and helping to mitigate feelings of loneliness and isolation. These aspects are especially important as a result of COVID-19 and it is important to engage with individuals living in long-term care to maintain feelings of connectedness. For example, staff, visitors, and residents will have to explore new ways of connecting while maintaining a safe distance.



Outdoor Designated Spaces

Long-term care residences can designate spaces outside that follow recommended physical distancing guidelines. Upon arrival, visitors can follow clear signage to understand the importance of these safety measures. Seating can be arranged for residents and visitors to safely visit. Long-term care staff or volunteers can monitor the space appropriately to ensure safety protocols are being followed. For example, a 6 foot table can be placed outside with the resident on one end, and the visitor on the other. The table and chairs can then be disinfected between visits.



Engagement with Music

Long-term care residents or visitors can supply music to listen to throughout the duration of their visit. Music can be used as a tool to bring a sense of normalcy and comfort during a time of change. Individuals can use music as a means of connection and to provide a sense of relaxation. Or, music can be used for stimulation, such as distance dancing or exercise. After visits, music devices can be disinfected by staff members.

For more resources, visit canage.ca/tools