



## Fundraising in Long-Term Care by Family Councils

The main purposes of a Family Council are to improve the quality of life of long-term care residents and to give families and friends a forum for sharing their experiences, learning and exchanging information. While each Family Council is unique, many have similar goals. The four most common goals are support for residents, their families and each other; facilitating and enhancing communication between families, staff and residents; providing a forum for education and discussing relevant issues; and advocating on behalf of all residents (not on individual issues).

Many Councils decide to do some fundraising, whether it's for a specific project or their ongoing activities. ILTCCABC does not encourage fundraising as a primary Family Council activity as it may distract from the primary goals of support, communication, education and advocacy. Many other Councils do not fundraise, and their work is as important and successful as those that do. Fundraising is not a requirement for a Family Council and is not an activity that needs to take place.

As with many fundraisers, the focus is on getting them off the ground and not thinking about the ongoing fiscal responsibility and allocation decision making in a way that is clear, democratic and yet flexible.

Here's an example of a council that supports ongoing fundraising. It provides an income for specific projects (like an activity cart for resident who are immobile or can't leave their room) or ongoing projects like annual garden revitalization:

Example considerations:

### **Fundraising Organization/Family Council:**

The Family Council is the fundraising organization of the **"Return-it Resident Fundraising (\*)** at a Vancouver Coastal Association of Family Councils (VCAFC) Long-Term Care Home.

**The Family Council Executive (\*\*)** has the primary authority to decide how funds are allocated.





**Fund Allocation Statement:**

Funds raised through the Return-it campaign will be accounted for monthly (income and expenses of running the campaign).

A **strategic plan (\*\*\*)** to allocate funds guides the Family Council on how funds should be spent to benefit residents of the long-term care home. This strategic plan is built and reviewed with input from families of residents at the care home. The Family Council will also solicit ideas from the Resident Council, Staff and Management as to what collective resident needs are.

**Transparency and Accountability:**

The family Council will keep records of their fiscal management discussion and decisions and make them available upon request.

**Regulatory Requirements:**

There are no Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) obligations that we know of

**Donor Intent:**

While not always legally binding, Family Council considers donor intent when allocating funds. Spending must benefit residents at the care home directly.

\* Insert a description of the ongoing Return-it fundraising campaign here \_\_\_\_\_

\*\* Insert the Terms of Reference for the Family Council here \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\* Insert a link to the strategic plan outlining your "wish list" of items for resident benefit \_\_\_\_\_

**Things To Do and Consider Before Fundraising**

1. Check in with the administration: It is important to let the administration know about any plans the Council has to carry out a fundraising activity within the home.
2. Does your home have an auxiliary or other fundraising body? Many Homes have an auxiliary whose mission is to fundraise for activities for the residents that the home cannot provide. If the Family Council is thinking about fundraising, then it is very important to check in with the auxiliary so that there will not be competing fundraising activities within the home.





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3. Accountability: Handling money well is an essential aspect of fundraising so that all money raised is accounted for and the accounts are clear and balanced. Many Family Councils that have not thought this through have had challenges. Consider:

- If the Council decides there is a need for a bank account, talk to the bank about the responsibilities and various options for an account. Whose name will be on the account, and who will have signing authority?
- Will there be a treasurer, and what will be the treasurer's responsibilities? It is important to think through not just the role in general, but also what the job of the treasurer will specifically include – how will he/she report on the funds? How often?
- How will decisions about money be made? How many members of the Family Council need to be present to make a fundraising or funding decision?
- What happens when one of the signing authorities leaves? Think through the process of ensuring that the signing authority on the account does not leave with them.
- How will you communicate with the Family Council, family members, donors and the public about how funds will be collected and what the money is going towards?

People want to know what they are being asked to support!

4. What is the purpose of the fundraising activity? Does this fundraising activity have the approval of the Family Council's general membership?

- It is essential that the fundraising activity has a designated purpose, and proceeds are used only for that purpose.

5. Other things to think about:

- Make sure that fundraising is not the primary focus of FC activities. Family Councils are more than a fundraising committee.
- Be cautious of any requests the home makes regarding fundraising. Do not fundraise for things the home has a responsibility to provide.
- If planning an activity that involves any raffle or gambling, make sure you have visited your local municipal offices to explore the licensing required for these activities. Once you have the information, ensure all members understand fully their responsibilities and agree with the activity.





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- Is there any potential conflict of interest, i.e. an activity that results in more than incidental personal benefit to an individual or corporation?
- Consider the number and extent of activities each year: How will the fundraising activity impact on the time spent on all activities by the Family Council members?
- How will you coordinate efforts across groups? Check in with the Residents Council and other groups in the home.

### **Charitable Status**

Some Family Councils have inquired about obtaining charitable status in order to provide donors with a tax-deductible receipt. This can be a complex undertaking which might divert the Councils from their main purpose of improving the quality of life of residents. For more information on charitable status, contact the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), the government department responsible for granting organizations charitable tax status. Phone the Charities Client Assistance department at 1-800-267-2384 or visit <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca> for more information.

