

UNDERSTANDING HOME SUPPORT SERVICES

Registration at the CLSC

As a caregiver, it is important to know the support that can be provided to you by your local community service centre, more commonly known as the CLSC. Its mission is to provide current health and social services as defined by the Act Respecting Health and Social Services (LSSS). The CLSC oversees the health and well-being of the population it serves. Therefore, it offers many services that meet the needs of seniors and individuals with limitations (e.g., respite, personal care, nursing care, psychotherapy, day centre).

Open A Case

To receive home support services, the first step is to open a case at your CLSC. The procedure is different depending on the region. For the majority of territories in Quebec, you have to contact your CLSC's Guichet d'accès [point of access]. On the respective CISSS/CIUSSS sites, the telephone number is usually indicated in the following section: Soutien à domicile [Home Support] or Soutien à l'autonomie des personnes âgées [Senior Independence Support]. Sometimes, you have to call 811. This is the case in the Outaouais region, for example.

Requesting that a case be opened can have many advantages for the person you are helping, and also for you. CLSCs offer a very broad range of services. If their services are not free of charge, they are low cost, which is very important. The contact who responds to your call will ask you some questions to assess the urgency of your situation. If you have to leave a voice message and you find that the timeframe for receiving a call back from this first call is too long or that your situation has changed, do not hesitate to contact them again. After a request to open a case is made, a home assessment of the situation is required. The case worker will then send you their recommendations and the accessible services.

The First Contact

During the first call and the meeting, it is important for you to openly share the reality of your situation with the various workers with whom you are interacting. If you are exhausted and need respite, say so. Knowing your needs can help the worker in their assessment of your situation and assure you that these needs will be adequately met. Home support services are in very high demand. Clearly stating their needs is thus the best strategy to adopt. Too often, the counsellors at Caregiver Support interact with caregivers who admit to having difficulty accepting that the tasks to be managed are too much.

In contrast, sometimes the caregiver states their needs and the services are not provided to them. These situations can be angering. To resolve them, you have to take one step at a time. You have to find out whether what you are asking exists. If the answer is yes, we recommend that you again tell the worker managing your case what your needs are. This person is often limited due to the availability of services, so, in such a situation, you can ask to speak to the manager to have your needs recognized. As a last resort, know that it is possible to file a complaint with the support of the commissioner of complaints for your region.

The importance of communicating about your situation
Remember that if your situation changes, even if your services are already in place, share this with the people who manage your case. Also, given the waiting lists when a case request is made, in addition to the time it takes to complete the steps and procedures before the services take effect, it is important not to wait too long. Do not wait until you are overwhelmed by the situation.

You may also contact us at Caregiver Support (1-855-852-7784 or info-aidant@lappui.org) so we can go over the services that can be accessed and provide more details on the procedure.