

When it's Time to Access Respite Care

By Cassandra Van Dyck



Caring for a spouse, parent or friend can be an incredibly rich experience. Supporting your loved one's health journey is an immeasurable gift, and in some ways could bring you closer to together. Caregiving can also take a toll – emotionally, physically, and financially. At some point on your journey, you will need support. At times this might look like a caregiver support group, a bit of help with cooking meals, or someone to help you with decision making. You may eventually find that you need more assistance, and are unable to take care of yourself or find the time to get all your jobs done. You might find you're unable to take care of yourself or that you just don't have the time you need to get all you need done, done. Accessing respite services can help you to take care of yourself, and in turn, better care for your loved one.

Read on for respite options on the North Shore, and tips for speaking with your loved one about accessing respite services.

Adult Day Programs

Adult Day Programs provide therapeutic support, often for those living with chronic illness or cognitive impairments. Day Programs provide opportunities to socialize, and enjoy activities such as physical exercise, games, music, crafts, and entertainment. Some programs offer health maintenance activities, such as hygiene, medication monitoring, grooming, and nutrition support. North Shore programs have nursing services available, if required.

Programs like these allow caregivers a break during the day so they can run errands, attend appointments, or just take some time for themselves to visit with friends and family or to relax.

There is an added benefit of providing your loved one with an opportunity to connect with new people and experience new things, which could improve their emotional and physical well-being.

Margaret Fulton Centre (VCH)

1601 Forbes Ave.

North Vancouver, BC

(604) 904-3550

Karyn.lewis@vch.ca

http://www.vch.ca/Locations-Services/result?res_id=1215

Health and Home Care Society of BC

Family Respite Centre

2711 East 49th Avenue

Vancouver, BC

(604) 327-9525

<https://www.carebc.ca/adult-day-program.html>

West Vancouver Adult Day Centre

139-2151 Gordon Avenue

West Vancouver, BC

(604) 922-2022

janet.spence@vch.ca

MyParkgate Break

3625 Banff Court

North Vancouver, BC

(604) 983-6350

rmatthee@myparkgate.com

In-Home Care

In-home care provides an opportunity for your loved one to be supported in the comfort of their own home. A service like this may be especially useful if your care partner is resistant to the idea of accessing respite services, or has trouble leaving the house. In-home care also gives caregivers a chance to respond to emails, or to go for a walk around the neighbourhood or catch up with

friends and family on the phone. Taking short breaks during the day can make a big difference in a caregiver's well-being.

Vancouver Coastal Health provides in-home assessments to determine eligibility for home-based support through the Home and Community Care Program. Home support hours, and more specifically, respite hours, are subsidized through VCH, and only certain types of tasks can be done; such as assistance with medication administration, etc. When you're becoming extremely tired or are feeling burnt out in your caring role, it is so important to ask for help by telling your case manager that you're fatigued.

VCH

Call (604) 986-7111 to get information on the Home Care hours or call **Seniors' One Stop** at (604) 983-3303 for a list of private options.

Overnight Care

Care receivers can enter in to a residential care facility overnight and receive medical care and be part of therapeutic recreation activities. In North Vancouver, Cedarview Lodge is the only facility offering subsidized overnight respite care. Overnight respite care gives caregivers an opportunity to leave town for a vacation, have surgery or other medical care that would prevent them from providing their loved one with care, or to just have some time at home to relax and regroup. Care receivers are given an opportunity to be cared for by an interdisciplinary team, and possibly be introduced to new therapies or activities that can support them in their journeys. Tours are on Wednesdays at 1:30PM and need to be booked in advance. Call (604) 904-6421 to book a tour.

Private Overnight Respite is also available. Call **Seniors' One Stop** at (604) 983-3303 for more information.

How to Talk to Your Loved One

You've learned about the kind of respite services that are available and feel the urgent need for a break. You trust that your care partner will safely be cared for, and will make the adjustment mostly okay. Now, how do you bring it up with your care partner? Talking to your spouse or parent about involving other people in their care, or perhaps providing a place for them to stay outside the home, can bring up all sorts of emotions. They might fear that you're hoping to involve (other) care professionals because they're too much of a burden on you, or worry that you're not doing well. Addressing and alleviating these fears can be very helpful.

Before you speak to your loved one, **do some research** on what options are available to you, the cost, and when you might be able to access services. Look in to the sorts of activities or therapies that will be provided for your family member. The more information you have, the better you will be able to answer your loved one's questions or concerns.

Take the time to **think about why** you're wanting to access respite care, and make a list if that's helpful for you. Are you feeling like you aren't able to take care of yourself the same way you formerly could, and you could use some time to exercise or prepare meals? Do you have doctor's appointments you've been meaning to book? Is there a family member or friend that lives out of town who you've been wanting to see? Or, are you feeling more tired than usual, and just need a little time off to rejuvenate? Communicating these feelings to your loved one will help them understand why you're hoping to access respite care.

When your loved one voices their concerns, **validate their emotions**. For example, if they say they're scared or worried, let them know that you hear them, and you want to work with them to find care that feels good for both of you.

Accessing overnight care may bring about a significant level of anxiety, both for the caregiver and for their loved one. Even though caregivers may desperately need the break, saying goodbye to your loved one for a week or more and relinquishing your daily routine can be very challenging. For your care partner, the thought of leaving their home and entering in to a care facility, if only temporarily, can be scary. Staff get to know the specific care needs of the client, and are welcoming and friendly. Consider booking a tour with your loved one, if possible, so you can both see the facility together and ask any questions you might have.