

**Menno Place LTC Family Council.
April 27, 2026 Meeting Minutes**

Attendees:

Rob Schulz (Chair), Sarah Freno (F Council), Leah Savage, Smitha (Director), Susanne Fehr, Palliative & Training Director at Abbotsford Hospice Society, Debbie Youngberg (F member), Devirani (End of life Dual)

Minutes:

Welcome and Introductions (5min)

1) A presentation by Susanne Fehr, Palliative & Training Director at Abbotsford Hospice Society. Suzanne is a family Caregiver of someone living at the menno, and leads the training and education on anticipatory grief support and has significant experience supporting families and care teams through this process. (15min) (Slides will be made available.)

- Role includes Caring for caregivers...
 - Each family is different and some need more support than others
 - Workshops are offered the 2nd Thursday of each month and
 - Drop in coffee groups are also offered at the hospice Society for caregivers, which offers a safe space for conversations

Topic: Anticipatory grief...How to be CG and take care of ourselves

- Challenges
 - Grieving begins as we see changes of deterioration
 - Stages of Anticipatory Grief
 - Denial to acceptance – the path is not linear...as changes come and go, it can make the grieving path more challenging
 - Establishing relationships with HCP
 - It is not always easy to trust HCP with our loved ones.
 - Maintaining the family structure
 - getting them to come to family events in LTC
 - Navigating other perspectives
 - Everyone has an opinion, that might not always fit with us
 - Dealing with people outside of family
 - Dealing with new reality

Finding Coping strategies:

- LTC can be just part of a long term role of caregiving
- Caregiving can become part of one's identity and we lose who we were before the caregiving began.
- It can be hard to take care of self
- It doesn't happen over night...

- Some strategies people use:
 - Control hours of visiting
 - Can be exhausting being there every day/every meal etc.
 - Ensure adequate sleep

- Sometimes we do not realize how little sleep people have when CG in the home...so can be a relief to have family in Menno
- Try to delegate to siblings
- Music
- Dance/dance/movement program...may work better than going to the gym...
 - Culture may play a role in what works for people
- Maintain intergenerational connections...

It is Key to Ask:

- How has my life changed since I became a CG, i.e. hobbies, socializing, sleep etc

Recommended strategies:

- Regular exercise
- Eating healthy stay hydrated
- Sleep a priority
- Relaxing activities/music/chiropractor
- Set goals/make plans, for the near and distance future
- Practice gratitude – get a book...date and state gratitude in AM..or add to calendar
- Focus on positivity
- Set boundaries and limits on CG
- Take off the Caregiving hat...

Half day workshop

- Demystifying health care for seniors by Abbotsford division of Family Practice.
- June 4th Thursday, 0830-1230
- Garden Park Tower
- #101 – 2825 Clearbrook Rd, Abbotsford

Conclusion:

- Anticipatory Grief is similar to grief of a death... but happens before the person dies...
- Roller coaster process
- We are in a grief journey throughout our Caregiving Role.

2) Consent changes at Menno – Presenter Sandra

- A presentation from Menno Home regarding changes to vaccine consent. Challenge getting consent from family...very labour intensive. Using document manager.- send out notices to family
 - Recently 340 consent forms were sent out via email...
 - In first week 60% were returned (in first 2 days).
 - After 1 week sent another reminder –
 - another 15% were returned
 - 40-50 calls were made – a significant drop from the previous 340 calls...

- Evaluation of trial launch
 - Attendees navigated the system okay...
 - More convenient...
 - Can be signed remotely or in-person
 - Concerns: There was a cc on the email that did not have a menno email address.
 - This was a Menno staff
 - Leadership will address what happened there.
 - Questions:
 - How often...fall and spring
 - It will be used for other consent processes, i.e restraints/MOST forms (after a conversation with Menno team)
 - MOST forms need a conversation prior to signature
- 2) Hours of care in BC LTC
- In BC hours of care is 3.36 hrs/day/resident
 - In the MH, each Care Aide
 - Accountability/staffing implication
- 3) Pets not allowed for staff
- Devirani Naidoo Residents, families, and staff interact in therapeutic ways...
 - Can the change in policy be revisited?
- 4) Parking
- Visitors pass, not all machines accept all cards
 - No parking available at certain times of day
 - Visitors elderly have challenges with machine
 - Reduce barriers for visiting elderly...cost
- 5) Family Council Feedback tracking

Concerns get put on Tracker...available on Menno Place Life Web Portal

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1qf2V43gEGBs8RcD6oN8tI_yE9WXYk_JA/edit?gid=1194695140#gid=1194695140

Minutes get posted on portal as well

<https://mennoplacelife.com/menno-home/family-council-minutes-feb-23-2026/>

Next Family Council Meeting: **June 22nd Monday 7:30 – 8:30**