

# Where you live



“I was constantly tired during treatment so that I could barely get out of my chair some days. I couldn’t look after my house the way I wanted to anymore. When I finally reached out for help, I felt a huge relief!”

**Joe**  
**Diagnosed with lung cancer**

## How does this affect me?

The effects of cancer and cancer treatment may make you want support to help you look after your home. This might mean looking for help with lawn maintenance or snow clearing, or there may be new issues with access or your mobility in your home space. It is normal to need help and getting started earlier rather than later is a great idea as things can take time to organize. The suggested tips here will help you find support to deal with challenges you may encounter.



## What can I do to improve my living situation?

You may have side effects due to your cancer diagnosis or treatments such as dizziness or decreased balance or mobility. Consequently, start by going around your home and list what you may want to adapt. You may need to modify or add features in the home to increase safety or make the environment more “user-friendly”. For example, you can review furniture set up to increase space to mobilize. Add toilet grab bars or chair in the shower. Consider removing rugs from floors that could be tripping hazards. Try brightening your lighting to decrease the number of dimly lit areas that are hard to navigate. Perhaps set-up a resting place on the main floor to avoid having to use staircase if your bedroom is on the upper floor.



### Need for relocation

You may find that there is no easy way to convert your current living space to meet your needs. It may be easier to start fresh somewhere new.

- This decision is easy for some and more challenging for others. There may be benefits of moving somewhere with services and an elevator, or moving closer to family and health care services.
- It is normal to feel an attachment to your home or to have fears of losing your independence. You may wish to explore and see what options are available before a move becomes necessary because of possible mobility or care factors.
- Your budget and the cost of moving are also issues for you to consider.



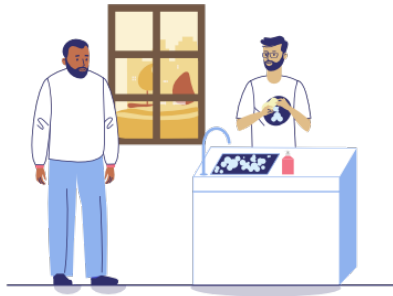
### Private residences

You may know of private residences through friends, family, or advertising that you might visit if you are considering relocating. There are also private agencies that can help you find a residence based on your care needs and wishes (location, language preferences etc.)—many at no cost to the person seeking the residence (similar to a real estate agent. Agencies you might use include: Visavie, Agence d'hébergement Doré, Gérontologie.



### Public residences

There are also public residences (Ressource Intermédiaire-RI or Centre d'hébergement et de soins de longue durée-CHSLD) in the community that may be an option, typically for those with more significant physical or cognitive limitations. Eligibility is based on care needs and applications cannot be made in advance of need. Applications for a public residence from the community can be discussed with, and are made through, the CLSC social worker. RAMQ manages the Financial Contribution Program for Accommodated Adults. The contribution amount that you have to pay for your accommodation in a health and social services facility in Québec is set by the government. For more information see [Accommodation in a public facility](#).



## What help do I need?

Depending on your living circumstances, whether you rent or own your home, whether you live alone or with others, your needs will vary. Look through these ideas as a starting place to build on:



### Home maintenance

You may need assistance with chores like snow removal, lawn maintenance, or house cleaning, on a temporary or longer term basis. Don't be afraid to ask for help. People around you may be eager to help but they don't know where to start. They will be very happy to hear from you and to be able to do what is really needed.

- Ask your family and friends to think about how, how often and how long they could provide help. Write it all down to refer to when needed.
- Give feedback when family members try to help. Let them know that their help is appreciated. Be honest about what you need and don't need. They might not know otherwise!
- Speak with neighbours who may have reliable service providers to refer you to.
- For further information see [Getting Support](#).



### For those who rent

Speak to your landlord about any maintenance issues such as heating, excessive noise from neighbours, snow clearing, or security lights that need replacing.

- You may wish to document dates of phone conversations, or better yet contact landlord by e-mail to help remember when support was requested.
- If important repairs are not addressed you may wish to contact the [Tribunal administrative du logement \(Régie de Logement\)](#) to determine how to proceed to have concerns addressed.



## Where can I find help?



### Your healthcare team

You can ask your healthcare provider for a referral to a social worker who can connect you to community services and resources. This can include information about private vs public residences or assistance with resources to improve your current living situation. Similarly, your healthcare team can refer you to an occupational therapist who may be able to evaluate your living space for renovations or equipment.



## CLSC

Your local CLSC can provide referrals for available services you might need located in your neighbourhood. They can also help with applications for public residences, and check your eligibility for subsidized house cleaning.



## Quebec Cancer Foundation

The Foundation provides a [resource directory](#) where you can search for the organizations near you offering a variety of services including home help, lodging, transportation, and other supportive resources.

### ••• Other kinds of support

When in doubt, ask – don't assume certain types of help aren't available to you. If you feel you need a service, there is no harm in asking.

- If preparing meals is a challenge for you, then contact a [Meals on Wheels](#) service in your area.
- Your school, work, or spiritual community might be happy to help cover practical needs such as cleaning and shopping. Ask a trusted friend in the community to try and organize this, if you are uncomfortable to do it yourself.
- If available, use online shopping and grocery delivery services.

## Resources

For more information on how to manage where you live, check out the resources below.

[Quebec Government – Finding a CLSC](#)

[Quebec Cancer Foundation – Resource Directory](#)

[Gouvernement du Québec – Using the Meals on Wheels Service](#)

[Gouvernement du Québec – Tribunal administrative du logement](#)

[Éducaloi – Legal information on housing](#)

[Regroupement of housing committees of Quebec \(RCLALQ\)](#)

[Front d'Action Populaire en Réaménagement Urbain \(FRAPRU\)](#)

[Éconologis – Free energy efficiency visits in your apartment](#)

[Gouvernement du Québec – Shelter allowance program](#)

[Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal – Subsidised housing \(HLM\)](#)

[211 Grand Montréal – Housing Advocacy](#)

[ROMEL – Regroupement des organismes du Montréal ethnique pour le logement](#)

[Legal Information Clinic at McGill](#)

[Comité logement du Plateau Mont-Royal](#)

[Project Genesis](#)

[Private Residences – Filing a complaint about the quality of services](#)

[Québec Ombudsman – Filing a complaint within the Health and Social services network](#)

## Acknowledgement of sources

The content of this document has been adapted from the following sources:

- Breastcancer.org. How to accept and ask for help when living with metastatic breast cancer. 2020.
- Canadian Cancer Society. If you are single and have cancer. 2020.
- TEMPO. Needing more help at home. 2016.
- ASCO. How to stay safe and independent during cancer treatment. 2019.

## **Healthcare professional endorsement**

The content of this document has been reviewed and approved by a team of healthcare professionals and clinical experts.

## **Disclaimer**

Please note that this fact sheet is not intended as a substitute for consultation with a healthcare professional. If you have questions about your health, or any medical issue, you should contact a healthcare professional right away. You should not delay seeking medical advice, or disregard professional medical advice, because of information in this fact sheet. Before beginning any health treatment, always consult your doctor. All care has been taken to ensure that the information contained in this document is accurate at the time of publication. e-IMPAQc is not responsible for any injury or damage to persons or property arising out of, or related to, any use of the fact sheet, or because of any errors or omissions.

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