



Module 1

Mechanisms for Welcoming New Residents

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MECHANISMS FOR WELCOMING NEW RESIDENTS

Module 1 refers to the mechanisms for welcoming new residents and aims to propose tools and activities to facilitate their adaptation and integration into the living environment. This document proposes a **process for pairing** a new resident with a welcoming-resident as well **as activities and tips** to help create relations between new residents and those already living in the facility.



BRIEF REMINDER OF THE PROGRAM



The Program GIFT in Residence aims **to provide tools and activities to promote goodwill in the living environment and to counter intolerance between residents**. The uniqueness of this program is the result of research based on the **experience of residents** who have witnessed or experienced intolerance between residents, as well as on the **experience of staff members and external intervenors** who have witnessed or intervened with one or more people involved in a situation of intolerance

between residents in private seniors' residences (PSR) or in this type of situation in general. It suggests guidelines and structures that can be used in whole or in part depending on the needs of the residence.

MODULE OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this module on the mechanisms for welcoming new residents are to:

- 1 Provide a **tool for residence general managers** to facilitate the adaptation and integration of new residents;
- 2 Propose **welcoming activities** that will quickly promote the integration of new residents into the living environment;
- 3 Promote a **culture of goodwill** for all stakeholders in the residences through tools and activities;

What is goodwill



Goodwill among residents refers to all **relationships that have a positive effect** on individuals: mutual aid, friendship, camaraderie, or a sense of community.

Volunteering, such as greeting new residents, sharing skills, such as accompanying a resident to the signing of their lease, or small everyday gestures, such as simply smiling and holding the door, are acts of goodwill.

Goodwill has positive effects on the people who experience it. Among other things, it helps to consolidate the sense of belonging to the living environment and to break the isolation that some residents experience.

PROCESS OF PAIRING A NEW RESIDENT WITH A WELCOMING RESIDENT

The pairing process consists of bringing together a resident who is new to the residence (new resident) and a resident who is already living there (welcoming-resident¹) to facilitate their integration into the new living environment and offer a personalized welcome. Its objective is to give each new resident self-confidence and full personal and autonomous responsibility. It also allows to:

- **Break the isolation** of residents;
- Encourage and formalize **mutual aid between residents**;
- Develop **relational and social skills**;
- Create **positive spin-offs** for the welcoming-resident (valorization, usefulness, self-esteem);
- Reduce the stress and anxiety of residents moving into a **new environment**;
- Promote peer **responsibility for the well-being of others**;
- Reassure and inform about **community practices**.

PAIRING FACILITATORS

To promote an **effective and sustainable pairing process**, it is important to:

- Foster **collaboration** and **communication** among the various stakeholders in the residence (e.g., Residents' Committee, Leasing Consultant, Lifestyle and Program Manager (LPM), General Manager);
- Designate someone to be **responsible for the pairing process** and ensure that this responsibility is recognized;

¹ The term "welcoming-resident" is inspired by [Health Standards Organization](#).

- Match the new resident and the welcoming-resident according to **their interests and availability**;
- Define a structured and systematic pairing process.

ROLES OF WELCOMING-RESIDENT AND NEW RESIDENTS

Welcoming-residents and new residents each have roles to play in the pairing relationship to ensure that it is effective and meets the expectations of both parties.

Welcoming-resident

The welcoming-resident acts as a resource person for the new resident. Therefore, the welcoming-resident must understand their role and responsibilities to the pairing and the new resident. In regards to the new resident, the welcoming-resident must:

- Respect the confidentiality of exchanges;
- Develop their confidence;
- Build self-esteem;
- Offer support;
- Make them feel secure in their new environment through the:
 - Visit of the residence
 - Presentation of activities
 - Introduction to the staff of the residence
- Ask them about their needs.

Once the pairing has been made, **the welcoming-resident must contact the new resident** to plan a first meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to get to know the new resident, validate their needs and interests and establish the relationship guidelines.

New resident

The new resident plays an important role in the relationship with the welcoming-resident. They must clearly define their needs to facilitate their adaptation and integration into their new living environment.

To optimize the relationship with the welcoming-resident, the new resident must:

- Clearly define their needs in relation to their new living environment;
- Be willing to learn;
- Accept the guidance of a welcoming-resident;
- Have a positive attitude towards the relationship.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A WELCOMING-RESIDENT

The welcoming-resident may also have **qualities that foster the development of a trusting relationship** with the new resident. Here are some of these qualities:

Be open to others and be a good listener	_____	_____	Be a person of trust
Be available and flexible	_____	_____	Be credible and have integrity
Express your limits and discomforts	_____	_____	Communicate in a healthy manner
Be positive and non-judgmental	_____	_____	Be patient and empathetic
Wanting to contribute to the well-being of others	_____	_____	Wanting to pass on knowledge

KEEP IN MIND



To avoid any problems, the welcoming-resident must avoid providing a financial service (e.g. bank withdrawal) to the new resident. If problems arise during the pairing process, it is the responsibility of the welcoming-resident to notify the person responsible for the pairing process.

STEPS IN THE PAIRING PROCESS

STEP 1: CREATE A SUSTAINABLE PAIRING PROCESS

■ Designate a person(s) responsible for pairing

There may be more than one person responsible for the pairing process, such as:

- The residence manager;
- The leasing consultant;
- The lifestyle and program manager;
- The Residents' Committee (if applicable);
- A welcoming sub-committee to be created (of people living at the residence).

Collaboration with the leasing consultant, who is the first contact with new residents, should be prioritized to find out the names and dates of arrival of new people in the residence. Collaboration between various individuals will optimize the pairing process.

■ Recruiting welcoming-residents

Once the responsible person or entity has been identified, the recruitment of welcoming-residents, who will act as a resource person, is required. To do this, there are a number of **communication methods** to consider:

- Residence newsletter;
- Posters in strategic locations;
- Intercom;
- Word of mouth;
- Direct contact with residents interested in volunteering.

■ Build a bank of names of welcoming-residents

It is important to include the names of residents interested in being a welcoming-resident in a bank created for this purpose to facilitate future pairing. It is recommended that the bank be **updated twice a year**.

DOCUMENT(S) TO BE FILLED OUT



[Welcoming-Residents' Interests and Availability Form](#) to get to know the welcoming-resident.

STEP 2: PREPARE THE PAIRING

Once the bank of names of welcoming-residents is complete, new residents can be offered to be paired with one of them.

■ Meet with the new resident to find out their interest in pairing

The leasing consultant may **informally explore the new resident's interest** in following up with the person or entity responsible for the pairing. If not the leasing consultant, this person will contact the new resident to meet with them to determine their interest in being paired with a welcoming-resident based on their needs.

If a couple arrives, each may have their own needs. This may require an adapted pairing, either by a couple or by two welcoming-residents.

DOCUMENT(S) TO BE FILLED OUT



At the meeting with the new resident, the [New Resident's Interests and Availability Form](#) should be completed to better understand the resident's needs and to suggest a welcoming-resident accordingly. It is important to mention that the information contained in the form must remain **confidential**.

KEEP IN MIND



The pairing of a new resident with a welcoming-resident is **voluntary** and based on the resident's needs.

If a new resident does not wish to be paired upon arrival, it is possible to contact them later to confirm if they need the service or not.

STEP 3: PAIRING

Once the new resident's interest in pairing has been identified and the interest and availability form has been completed, it is time to begin the pairing process.

■ Consult the bank of names of welcoming-residents

Based on the needs and interests of the new resident, **the person or entity responsible for the pairing consults the bank of names of volunteer welcoming-residents** to select the appropriate person. If more than one matches the new resident's needs and interests, it is up to the person or entity to select one person.

■ Contacting the prospective welcoming-resident

The prospective welcoming-resident must be contacted to advise them of a pairing opportunity and confirm their interest in hosting a new resident. If they agree, they will be given the resident's contact information and the prospective welcoming-resident will contact the new resident to get to know them and validate their needs.

■ Beginning the relationship

The welcoming-resident contacts the new resident to schedule an initial meeting to get to know the new resident and validate their needs. The welcoming-resident must provide the new resident with their contact information. During the meeting, guidelines for the relationship can be discussed and meeting times can be scheduled to facilitate the adaptation and integration of the new resident.

KEEP IN MIND



If the welcoming-resident's interest is confirmed, the person or entity in charge must give the new resident a copy of the [New Resident's Interests and Availability Form](#).

If the prospective welcoming-resident does not accept the role, the responsible person or entity shall select a new welcoming-resident from the bank.

DOCUMENT(S) TO BE FILLED OUT



The welcoming-resident shall refer to the residence's Code of Conduct and Ethics, which outlines the standards of conduct to be adopted.

STEP 4: FOLLOW UP THE PAIRING

The final step is to follow up with both parties to ensure that the relationship is meeting their expectations. Follow-up can be done **one to two weeks after the pairing has been initiated**, or subsequently if the new resident wishes.

■ Verify with the welcoming-resident and the new resident their satisfaction with the pairing

Follow-up can be done informally or formally by completing a [Pairing Appreciation Form](#) that combines the appreciation of both the welcoming-resident and the new resident.

■ Make changes to the pairing as needed

Follow-up with both parties may indicate that the relationship is not meeting their expectations or that there is a change in the new resident's needs. Therefore, the person or agency responsible for the pairing may recommend a change in the relationship.

DOCUMENT(S) TO BE FILLED OUT



It is recommended that the [Pairing Appreciation Form](#) be completed after a pairing to gather feedback from residents and to improve the process.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PAIRING PROCESS

- 1 **Recruit welcoming-residents twice a year, invite new residents to become welcoming-residents** and keep an **annual record** of the number of **new residents** to adjust the process as needed;
- 2 Empower a **designated person or entity to be responsible for the pairing process** and acknowledge their duties (if that person is a staff member);
- 3 **Update the Interest and Availability Forms** for welcoming-residents and new residents on an annual basis;
- 4 Ensure **smooth communication** between those involved (responsible person or entity, leasing consultant, welcoming-residents, new residents).

ACTIVITIES FOR WELCOMING NEW RESIDENTS

This section proposes **activities and tips to help new residents integrate** into their living environment. The suggested activities are designed to encourage discussion and create strong ties. Recommendations on the roles and attitudes that the activity leader should adopt are presented to ensure that they run smoothly. It should be noted that this is a non-exhaustive list of activities that could be improved upon by lifestyle and program managers.

ROLES AND ATTITUDES OF THE FACILITATOR

Having the right attitude

- Create a climate of trust: be diligent, punctual, reassuring and supportive;
- Be enthusiastic, welcoming and available. Listening skills and especially a smile encourage participation;
- Greet participants with positive remarks. For example, point out certain characteristics (clothing, hairstyle, jewelry, etc.);
- Dedramatize awkwardness and mistakes: Performance is not the objective; it is about creating bonds;
- Allow participants to relax and joke with each other on occasion.


Guiding activities

- Be receptive to participants' comments;
- Occasionally rephrase what a participant has just said, especially when it does not seem to be understood by others;
- Reinforce spontaneous interventions;
- Allow participants to catch their breath by summarizing the opinions expressed or by asking the group to do so;
- Avoid very competitive situations for participants who may not tolerate it well;
- Know how to diplomatically interrupt the person who is monopolizing the group's attention by pointing out that other people also have interesting things to share.


Paying attention

- Pay special attention to each participant and also to new residents who are participating in the group for the first time. Make the usual introductions;
- Pay attention to the non-verbal behaviours of the residents (mimicry, gesture, posture, tone of voice, etc.); this gives many clues about their inner state;
- Pay special attention to less articulate participants by asking simple or non-embarrassing questions;
- Take care to assess the participants' abilities.

“TELL US ABOUT YOU” ACTIVITY

Description	The objective of the game is to allow residents to get to know each other by sharing their experiences or what characterizes them. The activity aims to strengthen the residents' bonds , thus promoting a sense of belonging to the residence . It allows residents to become aware of their commonality in terms of values, experience, etc.
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “Tell us about you” displayed game; ▪ Dice; ▪ Sticky counters, e.g., post-it notes of different shapes and colours.
Procedure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All participants place their counters on the “Start” square; 2. Each participant takes turns rolling the dice and moving forward according to the number. They must answer the question written on the square; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The participant who does not wish to answer the question may refuse or tell a joke. 3. When participants are at the "Finish" box, they can share their knowledge, surprises, etc. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> b. There are no winners or losers.
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With the game projected on the wall, each participant is linked to a different coloured counter; ▪ Facilitator can move each counter on the digital game and roll the dice for the participants, or; ▪ Each resident can roll the dice and move his or her counter on the game.
Animation Variation	It is possible to print out a version of the game for each participant ; in this case, counters and dice can also be provided for each. Participants play together, but each has their own game board, which they can then use with their family members or other residents.
Game to use	<p>Click on the image to get your version of the game:</p> 

JEU SÉRIEUX “LA P’TITE VIE EN RÉSIDENCE”

Description	The Jeu sérieux “ La P’tite vie en résidence ” is part of the program to raise awareness “ L’intimidation : Chez nous y en n’a pas ! ” funded by the Secrétariat aux aînés and put in practice by the Centre collégial d’expertise en gérontologie (CCEG CCTT). The game aims to develop the residents’ knowledge about bullying, its consequences and the ways to prevent and counter it.
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Free training “Je fais jouer les personnes résidentes”; ▪ Awareness-raising material; ▪ Link to the game (scroll down the page to access the game); ▪ Information sheet on the behaviours to favour to print and arrange so everyone can see it; ▪ Device connected to the internet: mobile phone, computer, etc. (In case internet access is not available, contact the CCEG CCTT to find a solution: sensibilisation-intimidation@cegepdumond.ca).
How the game is played in a large group	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is possible to play the game, in a group or individually; 2. The game makes the players go through seven concrete bullying situations. Choices of behaviours are offered for each situation; 3. Feedback is given to the players to explain why the chosen options are appropriate or not. Thus, they will be more prone to intervene in the most appropriate way possible when bullying occurs; 4. For each answer given, the players win points and can replay to try and obtain more points and discover more information on the behaviours to favour.
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Plan 90 minutes for leading the game should there be a large group; ▪ The CCEG CCTT can offer support for the facilitation of the game; ▪ Access to the game and documents is free; ▪ Everyone must have increased awareness so the program “L’intimidation : Chez-nous y en n’a pas !” can achieve its goals. Consult: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the free training offer for the program; ○ the self-training video clip (10 min) for staff members and volunteers.
Animation Variation	Consult the trousse d’animation for more information on the different ways to play the game, as well as the activities to accompany it and improve the awareness-raising.
Game to use	<p>Click on the image to access the game (scroll down on the web page)</p> 

"2 MINUTES DE BONHEUR ENSEMBLE!" ACTIVITY

Description	This activity is based on the board game "2 minutes de bonheur ensemble". It contains 52 cards with four themes: "I tell", "I imagine", "Right now" and "I describe" to share memories, experiences, joys and dreams. The activity promotes sharing among residents.
Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purchase of the board game "2 minutes de bonheur ensemble" which includes instructions.
Procedure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Randomly, the first participant draws a card; 2. Participants take turns answering the question in two minutes (timed).
Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The board game "2 minutes de bonheur ensemble" is available in selected bookstores in Québec (in French); ▪ It is possible to use this game as inspiration and reproduce a version specific to the residence. Each resident writes a question on a piece of paper and they take turns answering it; ▪ This game was originally designed to promote intergenerational connections, but it has been adapted to promote exchanges between residents.

DOCUMENT(S) TO BE FILLED OUT



- [Activities Evaluation Form by the Facilitator](#) to see how to improve the activity and its animation;
- [Activities Appreciation Form by the Residents](#) to evaluate the level of relevance and appreciation of the activity.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE WELCOMING ACTIVITIES

- 1 Invite all residents to participate in activities, but **contact new residents personally** to inform them of an activity organized for them;
- 2 Improve and alternate the activities and their facilitation based on feedback from the evaluation forms;
- 3 Other suggestions for welcoming mechanisms:
 - Provide a **list of support resources** inside and outside the residence, designed from the Resources and Services Lists ([see Module 2](#));
 - Provide a **welcome gift** to new residents that could be designed by residents during an "I Brighten the Lives of Others" activity ([see Module 3](#)).

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