
**Important Update on the Louis Brier Home and Hospital & Weinberg Residence COMPANION PROGRAM
- January 26, 2022**

From : Louis Brier Home & Hospital <info@louisbrier.com>

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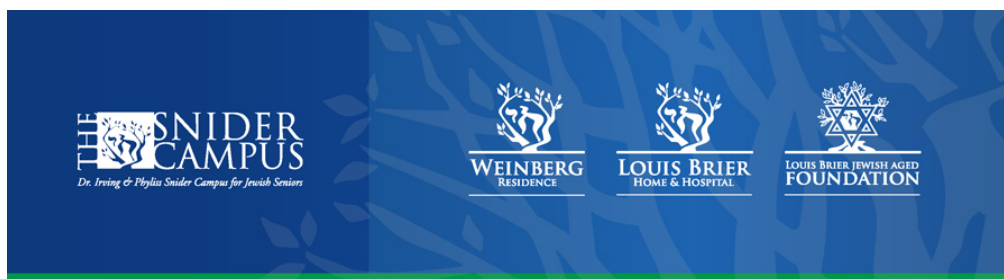
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LOUIS BRIER HOME AND HOSPITAL & WEINBERG RESIDENCE



**Important Update on the Louis Brier Home and
Hospital and Weinberg Residence
COMPANION PROGRAM**

January 26, 2022

Dear Companion Program Residents and Families,

BACKGROUND:

The Companion Program is a unique family-led and supported program, with administration assistance of Louis Brier. The Companion Advisory Committee (CAC), is co-Chaired by Myla Carpio-Pelayo, the Companion Program Coordinator, and Keren Gertsman, a family member of a LBHH resident. It is a committee that was formed to ensure the **successful continuity and growth of the Companion Program** at Louis Brier Home and Hospital (LBHH) and Weinberg Residence (WR). The CAC is comprised of:

- the Companion Program Coordinator, Myla Carpio-Pelayo
- the Manager of Infection Prevention and Control and Risk Management at LBHH and WR, Lunadel Daclan
- a family representative that participates in the Companion Program,
- a Family Council representative that participates in the Companion Program,
- a representative from the Resident Council Committee, and
- and a representative from the Companion group

The Companions who work with residents at LBHH and WR are instrumental to maintaining and enhancing the quality of life of the residents. The limited resources in long term care homes (the current model funds less than 4 hours of care per resident per day), makes it very challenging to focus on person-centered care. This is why we are so fortunate to have this extra tier of optional care through the Companion Program at LBHH and WR.

IMMEDIATE CONCERNS AND SOLUTIONS:

ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROGRAM

The Companion Program needs to fund itself via the monthly administration fee paid by families. This fee has not increased in more than three years, while the cost of administering the program has been increasing every year.

COMPENSATION: While we can write about our deep appreciation for this program, the actual reality is that we are not meeting current market compensation rates of pay for this valued level of care. Our companions are paid a minimum of \$18 per hour through the contracts that they have with families. We have not changed the recommended minimum in over three years. This is not reflective of market rates of pay and we are in immediate jeopardy of losing these valuable human resources.–

DEVELOPMENT: While our Companions are highly valued, we believe that they can benefit from learning and development opportunities that are not currently offered to them consistently. This is because it requires funding to

- i. pay for appropriate training programs and
- ii. provide coverage for companions during work hours so that they can attend training.

A PATH FORWARD: **Improvement is required to ensure the program remains financially viable, to ensure we compensate Companions appropriately, and to provide them with appropriate training.**

Members of the Companion Advisory Committee (CAC) have spoken with Louis Brier Management as well as at Family Council meetings.

The following recommendations have been made:

1. **Effective March 1, 2022, Companions paid through LBHH/WR will be compensated at market rate.** In reviewing salary ranges and recommendations with Work BC, we note that the median rate for jobs characterized as "Home Support Workers" is \$19.56 per hour. Separately, the median rate for jobs characterized as "Nurse Aids" is \$22 per hour. Additionally, in reviewing statistics provided by the Economic Research Institute, for Vancouver, the average hourly rate for a role similar to a Companion is currently \$21 per hour.

2. Based on the above, to begin to achieve a level of parity with the market rate, in line with other individual and institutional rates, **the Companion hourly rate is increasing to a minimum of \$20 per hour.** This represents an increase in cost to families/residents of 11%. Please note that pay rates have not increased in over three years.

3. In order to sustain the Companion Program and offer much needed training and development to the companions, we are adjusting the monthly administration fee, using a tiered structure, that will have residents with higher utilization of the program pay a higher fee than those who use the program only on occasion.

Effective March 1, 2022, the administration fee charged monthly will be:

- \$115 per month for those who use the program for over 45 hours each month
- \$100 per month for those who use the program between 15 and 45 hours per month
- \$45 per month for those who use the program for less than 15 hours per month

Recognizing that Companions are essential to achieving optimal resident outcomes, we are committed to ensure that the two elements noted above are achieved without delays. These include, but are not limited to:

- Adjusting compensation rates to meet current market rate, and
- Ensuring that continuing education and training is provided based on relevancy and appropriateness of content and activities.

Meeting the above objectives will be instrumental in **retaining and attracting** the required number of **companions to meet the growing needs and demands of residents at the LBHH and WR.** These changes will prevent unnecessary turn over, leading to a stable, reliable, and happy Companion team.

We encourage Companion Program Families to send their feedback and/or questions to:

E-Mail address kgertsman@shaw.ca **on or before February 11, 2022.** All questions or comments will receive a response within 5 days of receipt of the E-Mail.

Sincerely,

The Companion Advisory Committee



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