



2026

Welcome to Traverse Independence Transitional Living Program

Head
Office

1382 Weber Street East – Unit 1, Kitchener, ON N2A 1C4
Email: info@travind.ca | Tel. 519-741-5845
Website: traverseindependence.ca

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TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM LOCATIONS

The Transitional Living ABI (Acquired Brain Injury) Program is a specialized rehabilitation program that provides individuals living with the challenges of a significant brain injury the ability to reclaim their independence in a therapeutic setting, through a variety of structured programs and goals, specific to their individualized needs. This program is staffed 24 hours a day with PSW (personal support workers) who provide support and service to individuals during their transition to become independent. Programs are designed for each participant individually through structured training, rehabilitation, homemaking, and personal support services, etc.

Participants are admitted into the Transitional Living Program on a three-month trial period. Participants in the program and/or substitute decision makers must sign quarterly Service Agreements to maintain their place within the Program. Participants transition to the community ideally once their goals have been achieved and they are determined by the clinical team to have acquired the skill set to be safe and successful. On occasion if the participant is not participating in the program or is breaching the rules as laid out in the policies, procedures, and service agreement will receive a discharge from the program.

Participants do not sign a lease or rental agreements.

Participants in this program are accommodated in one of our care units, which provide a comfortable and supportive environment. Each unit comes fully furnished and includes all necessary kitchen amenities. While the care units offer privacy to promote independence, participants are expected to engage in their individualized daily programming, which is typically structured throughout the day within their care unit or in the community.



78 Stanley Avenue - Kitchener ON N2K 2B2



165 Gordon Street - Fergus, ON N1M 0A7

MISSION STATEMENT AND VALUES

WELCOME TO TRAVERSE INDEPENDENCE

MISSION

We maximize our client's ability to live independently by providing support services for adults with a physical disability or brain injury.

VISION

Supporting people to traverse the distance to independence.

VALUES



COMPASSION is the cornerstone of our interactions, fostering empathy and understanding in every engagement.

ACCOUNTABILITY drives our actions, ensuring transparency and responsibility in all our commitments.

RESPECT forms the foundation of our relationships, honouring the dignity and value of every individual.

EXCELLENCE propels us to consistently deliver outstanding results, striving for the highest standards in all we do.

SUPPORT is our pledge to uplift and assist, providing unwavering encouragement and aid to those in need.

BEING A PARTICIPANT OF TRAVERSE INDEPENDENCE TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM

PARTICIPANT BILL OF RIGHTS

You have the right to:

- Be treated with courtesy, respect, and dignity.
- Be treated as an individual.
- Be informed about services in the agency and the community.
- Participate in the planning of your service.
- Say yes or no to service.
- Voice your concerns.
- Review your participant file.

THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

You have the right to privacy. This right shall be recognized and protected to the greatest extent possible. There are a few forms you will be asked to review and sign to ensure your privacy is maintained.

All information about you is considered personal and confidential. Participants will be asked to review and sign a consent to collect and disclose personal information form before anyone at Traverse Independence can discuss your personal information. As outlined in the Service Agreement failure to provide consent and or withdrawal consent could result in an immediate discharge from the program.

Traverse Independence staff do have a master key to all care units to have access for the provision of services and in case of emergencies. We try to adhere to 24-hour notice of entry for external service-related purposes.

Privacy is especially important to Traverse Independence and written permission will occur when using photographs of any participants on any Traverse Independence social media.

A photo of all Transitional Living Program participants is required for the Emergency Contact Form.

PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Treat all employees with respect and dignity.
- Follow all the “house rules” for the site you are living in.
- Maintain a safe work environment for employees, free of harassment and hazards.
- Report any safety incidents and report any injuries.
- Cooperate with reasonable and fair requests by the organization.
- Participate in the orientation and training of employees.

- Attend participant care planning meetings.
- Participate in evaluation of employees and the program as requested.
- Notify Traverse Independence of any changes required to the care plan.

WELCOME TO THE TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM

Please review the program Acceptance Letter as it details the scheduled date to move in, address, current program fees, and your primary site staff contacts.

Participants will be responsible for paying for all groceries, laundry, cleaning supplies, personal items, and entertainment. Please see the section at the end of the handbook that outlines recommended items to bring on your first day.

The care unit is fully furnished, and it comes with a bed, dresser, loveseat, and television. All kitchen appliances are included, and you will have access to cooking essentials such as pots, pans, oven trays, and cutlery. Should participants wish to bring in their own furniture or items from home please advise the intake team and or the site Service Coordinator so arrangements can be made.

Traverse Independence is unable to assist moving participant items and or furniture. This is the responsibility of the participant. If a moving company is arranged, an invoice for this service will be sent to the participant for payment.

While you are in the Transitional Living Program, you will have access to 24/7 attendant care support. You will also receive additional supports through a community facilitator for an average of 2-3 hours per week. Traverse Independence staff will work with you to assist you in all activities of daily living and life skill development. This includes medication management unit cleaning and laundry, grocery shopping, meal preparation, and budgeting.

Many participants find themselves with unstructured downtime, without any staff support throughout the day, we encourage all participants to spend this time with their hobbies and activities they enjoy. Please provide a list of items that you plan to bring to your new unit.

All participants of the Transitional Living Program must be on site and participating in the program for a minimum of 5 out of 7 days each week.

Participants are admitted to the Transitional Living Program for an initial three-month trial period. Near the end of this period, the Site Service Coordinator will arrange a transition planning meeting with you and your family or supports. During this meeting, we will review your progress toward your goals, discuss anticipated discharge dates, and determine when the next transition planning meeting will take place.

We request consent to communicate with current community supports so that we can provide a collaborative approach. A transition planning meeting will occur with or without the participant, but participant's participation is preferred. This will ensure that the applicant is an active participant, who values commitment to working in the Transitional Living Program.

PROGRAM FEE

Participants are responsible for paying their program fees, which include heat, hydro, water, local, television, and internet. Please refer to the acceptance letter for current program fees.

Participants who are in the Kitchener location will have access to a phone.

Participants are responsible for paying for all groceries, cleaning supplies, personal items, entertainment, and laundry. Please let us know if a parking spot is required, depending on location, there may be a charge for this.

Subsequent program fee payments are due on the 1st of each month. Please make cheques payable to Traverse Independence Head Office at 1-1382 Weber St. E. Kitchener, ON N2A 1C4. Participants can also send an e-transfer to the Accounting Specialist.

We do understand that some of the participants moving into the program may have a Public Guardian and Trustee. The Intake team, site staff and management can work with them directly to ensure ongoing communication on program expenses.

Traverse can also assist in communicating with the Ontario Disability Support Program for payment of program fees and change of address.

Please note that if a participant is applying for private services, they need to contact the intake department directly to review further financial information.

TRANSPORTATION

Traverse Independence promotes independence and community participation. Transportation support may be available when it aligns with rehabilitation goals, scheduled medical appointments for which you require support, or objectives identified within the client's service plan.

Transportation availability is subject to staffing resources and scheduling.

Clients travelling with a Community Facilitator are required to purchase a rider card. Rider cards cost \$30 and is calculated on amount of kilometers driven.

The Transitional Living staff make every effort to support community integration through public transit and taxis. Please note that there is no public transit available at the Fergus location.

SERVICE AGREEMENT

Before participating in Traverse Independence services, you will sign a Service Agreement. Signing the Service Agreement confirms that you want to be an active participant and reside in the Transitional Living Program.

The service agreement clearly outlines what Traverse is responsible for and committed to provide. As well, the agreement outlines Participant responsibilities. This agreement will be renewed after the three-month trial period in the program. The service agreement will be renewed every 3 months thereafter until participant discharge.

If we notice that you are having trouble participating in the Transitional Living Program, we will try to work with you resolve and issues or barriers that might be making it difficult for you. In some cases, we may need to end service with you. If discharged, we can assist in making community referrals and review program eligibility again in the future.

HOUSE RULES

- Participants will treat all staff with dignity and respect.
- Participants are responsible for providing Traverse Independence with their monthly programing fee, on the first of each month.
- Participants cannot have anyone else residing in the care unit.
- Staff will have access to a second set of unit keys, which will be used to access the units if necessary.
- Participants acknowledge while participating in the Transitional Program, that Agency staff will respectfully enter participant care units to:
- Provide scheduled support and services.
- Complete weekly health and safety checks to ensure the care unit remains clean and tidy and to ensure the participant is maintaining a safe living and working environment.
- The participant should provide 3 hours of notice to cancel any appointments with their Community Facilitator and 30 minutes for a scheduled schedule/appointment.
- If a pattern develops where cancellation of services is frequent, the service coordinator and the participant will come together to problem-solve a solution.
- All participants must sign in and out with the staff at the office.
- Participants are encouraged to not consume alcohol and/or substances while participating in this program. A review of participant's individualized service plans and a harm reduction model may be considered a suitable approach for care planning. Any harm reduction approaches used will be outlined in the Individualized Service Agreement, which the participant will be responsible for following as part of their programming. Any alcohol and/or substance consumption cannot interfere with the participation in this program.
- Smoking in Care Units and buildings is prohibited. Smoking includes tobacco, cigarettes, pipes, cigars, vaping, e-cigarette, and smoking or vaping marijuana. Participants are responsible for only smoking in designated smoking areas. There are no exceptions to this rule.
- In care units, open flames are prohibited, including all candles and incense.
- Participants will not utilize the Traverse telephones provided for long-distance telephone calls.
- All expenses incurred from making a long-distance phone call will be charged to the participant.
- Participants who wish to possess a pet (cat or dog, 6 months or older, litter or potty trained **only**) must first obtain full approval from the service coordinator and manager. The participant must be:
- Financially capable of caring for their pet (food, annual vet visits and required vaccinations).
- Physically capable of feeding and cleaning up after their pet in the designated poop and scoop areas and litterboxes.

- Before any permanent pets are approved to reside with the participant participants must provide proof of clean bill of health vaccines to Service Coordinator. And annually thereafter for the pet to remain with the participant.
- If a participant is away overnight, the participant is required to arrange care for their pet during their absence. Staff will not be responsible for caring for the pet in the participant's absence.
- Participants are responsible for the behaviour of any visiting or permanent pets. Visiting pets must remain on a leash in communal areas and under control of the owner while in their care unit.
- According to health and safety, all visitors must sign in and out with the staff at the office.
- Visitors are welcome on the site but must be approved in advance by the service coordinator.
- Visitors are required to give notice of their visit.
- Visitors are not allowed between 10:00 pm to 8:00 am.
- We request that visitors (family, friends, external support) do not interfere with the schedules of the participants. If a routine/appointment needs to be cancelled, prior approval will be required.
- When visitors are on site, Traverse Independence Staff will not be providing any support during that time.
- Visitors are required to respect all house rules and comply with all Health & Safety standards. Anyone on site disruptive to the Transitional Living Program will be asked to leave the property immediately. If a visitor refuses to leave for any reason, staff will call Waterloo/Wellington Regional Police, and the visitor will be asked not to return.

**** Any request for exemptions to the above rules will need to be submitted in writing to the service coordinator and manager for approval.**

WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE FIRST FEW DAYS AND A SAMPLE SCHEDULE

Prior to arriving at the program, the Intake team and/or site team will coordinate with the participant and their supports as to transportation details, arrival time, what personal belongings are being brought.

Traverse Independence will provide you with a list of all the items included in the care unit. These items will remain in the unit when a participant has completed the program. All participant-owned items should leave with the participant at the end of the program, on the day that is specified on the discharge letter. Any unclaimed items will be removed at the participant's expense.

Participants can expect that during the first 21-day period:

- Will be assessed by an Occupational Therapist
- Experience an increased level of support and monitoring by site staff.
- Participants will work with staff for all mealtimes, (breakfast, lunch, dinner) as well as additional medications and check in times. This is to monitor participant adjustment into the program and to get a better understanding of daily support needs.
- Meet with their Community Facilitator at least once per week to develop their goals.

If additional community supports are required as part of your goals, your community facilitator will work with you to get set up with those supports.

Here is an example schedule of the first and second day in the Transitional Living Program

First Day

- Travel to Traverse location at _____
- When you arrive at site, you will meet with the Service Coordinator
- You will be introduced to staff on-site
- The Service Coordinator will provide a tour of the site and your living unit
- Staff can help you organize items in your unit
- Staff will give you some time to yourself and will assist you in preparing dinner; staff will provide a check-in call in the evening to see if you need any assistance. You will be offered an overnight check-in if needed.

Second Day

- Staff will come to assist with breakfast and morning needs during your first scheduled routine at _____
- Your Community Facilitator (CF) whose name is _____ will meet you at _____ in your unit. You and the CF will work together on:
 1. Filling in the rest of your weekly schedule
 2. Understanding House Rules
- Talk about the site Program, as well as your responsibilities and staff responsibilities.
- Staff will come and assist you in making Lunch at _____
- Staff will come and assist you in making Dinner at _____

Please note:

We will do our best to accommodate the client's preference for schedule; however, timing may fluctuate due to staff availability to provide the routine at the preferred time.

PERSON CENTERED CARE

It is important that participants know they have the right to put forth opinions on the services we deliver, and we constantly improve the quality of those services. The following framework has been put forth as a basis for those conversations. We are committed to asking for your feedback on a regular basis through meetings, surveys, and email requests. For individuals who have a Substitute Decision Maker or Power of Attorney, their feedback will also be considered.

Core principles of the framework are based in the Traverse Independence strategic plan and Traverse Independence values, which were developed by staff and participants: CARES – Compassion, Accountability, Respect, Excellence and Support.

HOW DO WE DESIGN THE INDIVIDUALIZED SERVICE PLAN (ISP)?

The ISP is your goal planning that is developed with you, the Transitional Living Program team, which could include Community Facilitator, Service Coordinator, and/or Occupational Therapist. You are welcome to include any support persons, such as family or friends, or community supports such as a social worker or mental health worker to also participate in the development of your goals. We encourage participation and collaboration with external community teams, and value their inputs.

CARE CONFERENCES

In the Transitional Living Program, you will be asked to attend care conferences. These meetings will take place after your first three months, and on an as needed basis, or annually, with the participants and Transitional Living staff. In these meetings, each participant will review the ISP, their goals and care needs. A discussion on discharge planning will also occur during these meetings and might include the discussion on completing different housing application forms. This meeting is open to anyone the participant chooses to have present including external community supports.

WHAT ABOUT CHANGES TO THE SCHEDULE?

Any changes or concerns related to your schedule should be directed to the community facilitator. Should your request not be approved, the service coordinator will review the site schedule and determine how to best accommodate the request. Twenty-four hours' notice is required so that we may accommodate the request. Without this length of notice, due to other routines or commitments we may not be able to accommodate the request. The exception to this is in the event of an emergency.

CARE GIVER ENGAGEMENT/INVOLVEMENT

We encourage family and care givers to be involved in the participant's journey through the transitional living program. Should the participant not provide consent for Traverse Independence to speak with specific family members or supports, we will not share any personal health information with them.

DECISION MAKING

Participants have the right to make decisions on their own. This could be around their care plan and finances. If a participant has been deemed incapable of making their own decisions, then Traverse Independence will work alongside the client's power of attorney, substitute decision maker, or public guardian.

Participants will always be involved in their care planning and their goals even if a substitute decision maker or power of attorney is required.

EMERGENCIES

Traverse Independence has a plan that covers what will happen in an emergency such as a flood, power outage, and a pandemic. We will keep participants, and their family informed and will provide updates as required.

In the event of an Emergency, we ask all participants to sign an “Alternate Accommodation Form,” which is included in the service agreement, so if we required residents to leave site for a period, we have an address on file. If a participant does not have a place to stay in the community, Traverse does have alternate arrangements at both the Stanley Ave and Fergus location.

Participants coming into the program will be asked to sign an Emergency Contact form which provides staff and program Management with a list of who to contact in the event of an Emergency. Participants will also have a photograph taken to be put onto the Emergency Contact form.

MEDICATION, PHARMACY & COMMUNITY HEALTH TEAM

All participants coming into Traverse Independence Living program are required to have their medication be sent to the Traverse Independence preferred Pharmacy. Upon admission into the program, the Intake department will set up participants’ account with the preferred pharmacy to ensure transfer of medication goes smoothly.

Please be advised that Traverse does not cover the cost of participants medication, personal care items and/or any required adaptive equipment or devices, such as wheelchairs, walkers, grab bars, transfer benches, etc.

All participants coming into the program will require a primary care physician or nurse practitioner to prescribe medication and for annual wellness appointments and checkups. Traverse Independence staff can assist the participant to schedule medical appointments and are able to assist those participants that require additional support during the appointment.

Upon discharge from the Transitional Living Program, site staff will help the participant transition to a community Pharmacy.

Medication on Site

All participant medications, including over-the-counter medications, will be stored in a secure location within the staff office. The Service Coordinator and/or Occupational Therapist will work with each participant to develop a Medication Independence Care Plan, with the goal of progressing the participant toward a self-administration program.

WHO IS INVOLVED IN PARTICIPANT CARE AT TRANSITIONAL LIVING?

INTAKE COORDINATOR

The Intake Coordinator will work with the participant in preparing and signing all the Transitional Living documents and providing copies of all site policies to the individual. The intake

coordinator role is also to communicate and coordinate with the individual's care team and community supports with the consent of the participant to ensure a smooth transition to site. This includes communication to the Ontario Disability Support program, Public Guardian, and Trustee (if applicable), and setting up medication with Resident Care Pharmacy.

The intake coordinator will also provide the participant with site contacts and set up any planning meetings necessary prior to the move to site.

SERVICE COORDINATOR (SC)

The Service Coordinator provides on-site management of the program. They are responsible for overseeing the staff and ensuring the participants' participation in the program runs smoothly.

COMMUNITY FACILITATOR (CF)

The Community Facilitator (CF) plays an important role in helping participants transition into the program. They work directly with each participant to develop and organize a personal support schedule and to coordinate on-site attendant care services. The CF also communicates with the participant's existing care team and family members to ensure everyone stays informed and connected throughout the program.

One-to-one sessions with the Community Facilitator will be scheduled to support participants in achieving specific personal goals. The CF will meet the participants at their care unit at a pre-arranged time to work on participant goals, and to structure routines.

After graduating from the program, participants who remain in the Waterloo Region or Wellington County will have the option to continue working with a Community Facilitator to support their transition back into the community.

ATTENDANT CARE WORKERS (ATC)

The Transitional Living Program has 24-hour support provided by our ATC (attendant care staff).

Attendant Care staff will work with the participant throughout their daily scheduled programming, such as daily schedule, preparation and support with all meals, laundry, housekeeping, medication management, and more. Overall, the ATC staff work front-line with the participant to support in building the skills they need to accomplish their goals and a greater level of independence.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST (OT)

The occupational therapist provides both direct and indirect consultation services to participants and staff members. Areas of intervention focus on the development of routines and skills needed for the participants to be discharged to their environment of choice.

The administration of formalized functional and cognitive assessments may be completed by the occupational therapist as needed to collect information that will be used to develop routines and programs that are a good fit for the participants goals and skill levels.

BEHAVIOURAL FACILITATOR (BF)

The behavioural facilitator provides indirect support to the attendant care staff, community facilitator(s), community support teams, and familial supports. The BF support involves providing approaches and strategies to Traverse Independence staff towards improving participant engagement to facilitate more effective support. As a participant's rehabilitation may include a variety of supports, the BF may collaborate with external community supports to ensure a cohesive and consistent approach when supporting the participant.

The BF acts as a resource to staff and program planning for the participant; the BF can provide direct support to the participant depending on the circumstances of the support.

RELATIONSHIPS

DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Traverse Independence is dedicated to providing an atmosphere free from barriers in order to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion. We celebrate and welcome the diversity of everyone involved with the organization. It is the policy of Traverse Independence to foster an environment that respects people's diversity, dignity, ideas, and beliefs thereby ensuring equity and diversity in employment and service delivery. We demonstrate commitment to this by providing a supportive work environment and a corporate culture that welcomes and encourages equality and inclusion for all.

We make sure offices, facilities, and housing buildings are accessible for anyone, we follow the Ontario accessibility laws (AODA), and plans are available on the Traverse Independence website.

HARASSMENT AND ABUSE

If you feel that you have been experiencing harassment and abuse, Traverse Independence will support you to deal with any situation. Please report the situation to the service coordinator or manager as quickly as possible. All information will remain confidential.

The following are guidelines:

- Talk to someone you trust. This might be a member of your family, a friend, a minister, a counselor or therapist, an attendant, the life skills facilitator/community facilitator, the service coordinator, or the program manager. You can also call a crisis hotline or sexual assault center.
- Do not let your fears stop you from speaking out. Fear of retaliation, intimidation, embarrassment, or feelings of guilt may persuade you not to make a complaint. However,

harassment and abuse will probably continue if not dealt with properly. Therefore, it is important to register a complaint.

- Ask for help if you need it and take things one step at a time.

Participant to Staff:

Workplace violence is the exercise, statement, or behaviour of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker.

If you have deliberately attempted to cause injury, or have repeatedly shown disrespect and abusive behaviour, to another client, staff or, have repeatedly failed to collaborate and cooperate with the Agency, or have failed to follow generally accepted safety procedures, your service agreement may be immediately cancelled by written notice. In such cases, to the extent possible and as appropriate, you will be informed of specific instances described through incident reports, and the Agency will make efforts to resolve the situation with you.

ROLE OF FAMILY

Traverse Independence values the involvement of family members and social support in a participant's journey. Family and support networks play an important role in the success of participants in the Transitional Living Program.

During the initial intake process, Traverse Independence may contact family members and other supports for the purpose of gathering information, provided the participant gives consent. Family and supports are encouraged to be involved in care planning and to understand the programming that participants will take part in during their time in the Transitional Living Program. With the participant's consent, family members and supports may also participate in case conferences, assist with transportation to appointments, and join recreational or off-site activities.

We recognize that family members may have questions or concerns about the support provided through the program. Families are encouraged to share their perspectives directly with the Service Coordinator or Manager.

To ensure consistency in learning and skill development, family members are discouraged from offering alternative forms of support outside of the program's established structure.

Family members visiting the participant are considered visitors and are expected to follow all house rules and Health & Safety standards. This includes signing in and out upon arrival and departure and informing staff if they are leaving the premises with the participant.

VISITORS

All visitors are required to sign in and out at the staff office. This includes care providers, family, and friends.

- Visitors are welcome on the site but must be approved in advance by the service coordinator.

- Visitors **MUST** provide notice of their visit to the Service Coordinator.
- Visitors are not allowed between **10:00 pm to 8:00 am**.
- When visitors are on site, Traverse Independence Staff will not be providing any support during that time.
- Visitors must respect all house rules and comply with all Health & Safety standards.
- Visitors are not permitted to bring illicit substances or alcohol onto Traverse Independence property.
- Smoking and/or vaping of tobacco, and/or marijuana are not permitted inside the buildings. Guests must use the designated smoking areas for participants.
- Anyone on site disruptive to the Transitional Living Program will be asked to leave the property immediately.
- If a guest refuses to leave for any reason, staff will call Waterloo/Wellington Regional Police, and that guest will be asked not to return.

Please note participants are expected to be on site 5 out of the 7 days a week, exceptions being holidays and/or special occasions.

24-HOUR ON CALL

Staff have access to a 24/7 system that connects them with an on-call responder. This system is used for oversight in an emergency or in a difficult situation.

Places to Call for Help or Information

AGENCY	CONTACT INFORMATION
Traverse Independence Main Line	Phone: 519-741-5845
Here 24/7 Crisis line and intake for mental health and addictions services	Phone: 1-844-437-3247
InfoAbility Information and referral service	Toll-free: 1-800-665-9092 Internet: www.infoAbility.org
ARCH Disability Law Centre	Phone: 416-482-8255 TTY: 416-482-1254 Internet: www.archlegalclinic.ca
KW Sexual Assault Support Centre	Phone: 519-571-0121 TTY: 519-571-0864 Email: kwsasc@web.net
Guelph-Wellington WIC Crisis Line	Phone: 519-836-5710 or 1-800-265-7233 Supports in languages other than English: 1-866-863-0511
CMHA Waterloo Wellington, Lead Agency for Here 24/7 and Compass Community Services Selected as Partners to Support New Mental Health Crisis Helpline	9-8-8

AGENCY	CONTACT INFORMATION
Waterloo Regional Police Services	Emergency line: 911 Non-emergency phone: 519-653-7700
Fergus OPP	Emergency line: 911 Non-emergency phone: 519-846-5930
Health Services Appeal and Review Board (HSARB)	Phone: 416-327-8512

PARTICIPANT AND STAFF RIGHT TO BE SAFE

Traverse Independence has an obligation to protect the participant's health and safety but also the health and safety of the people who work with participants.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (GLOVES, MASKS, GOWNS)

Traverse Independence employees must wear gloves when they are providing personal care. This includes situations where they think they might be exposed to bodily fluids such as urine. Changes in participants health may require the staff to use additional personal protective equipment, such as gowns and masks.

PARTICIPANT EQUIPMENT

If a participant requires any form of equipment for mobility and to be safely left alone within their unit then Traverse will work with participant care team and request an Occupational Therapist from Ontario Health at Home (<https://ontariohealthathome.ca/>) to access participant within the unit prior to them moving onto site. This will ensure participant and staff safety. All equipment must be delivered and installed before participant can come to site.

Prior to use staff will inspect all equipment that is used by an employee during routines. Participants are responsible for the repair of any equipment and staff will not use any equipment that is found to be in disrepair until such time that it can be repaired. Participants are responsible for ensuring that maintenance inspections are completed annually on all equipment, by an approved vendor.

LIFTS AND TRANSFERS

Traverse Independence has very strict rules on how we lift (mechanical lift) or how we transfer. An occupational therapist will be requested to come in and review the lift or transfer with staff because we want to be sure it is safe for both the participant and the staff.

If Traverse is not provided with the necessary equipment to ensure participant safety, then a delay in move could take place. All equipment costs and program fees are expected to be paid by the participant; Traverse will not cover the cost of any form of equipment.

FALLS PREVENTION

At Traverse Independence we have a 'no lifting' policy. This means that Traverse employees are not able to take on any participant weight during daily tasks, transfers, or during falls. Should a participant experience a fall while on site, non-emergency responders will be contacted for support.

Traverse Independence focuses on the prevention of falls whenever possible. We strive to prevent falls in a way that preserves function, independence, and dignity.

New participants are screened during the intake process and, if they are noted to be at risk for falls, a plan is developed. If a participant has a fall while in the program, this will be identified by the incident reporting and falls assessment system. The participant is required to inform the staff about any falls or injuries while residing in the program.

Falls assessments will be done with the client on an annual basis, or after each fall. If the participant is at risk of falling, then staff will complete the assessment as required.

SMOKING/VAPING – TOBACCO AND MARIJUANA

The Transitional Living Program care units are **smoke free environments**. This means all participants and visitors are not allowed to smoke in the care units. Smoking includes tobacco, cigarettes, pipes, cigars, vaping, e-cigarette, and smoking or vaping of marijuana. Clients are responsible for only smoking in designated smoking areas. Where smoking is permitted outdoors, participants must ensure they smoke ONLY in designated smoking areas. There are no exceptions to this rule.

At the Stanley Ave location the designated smoking area is located under the garden gazebo, or behind the care unit complex B.

At the Fergus location the designated smoking area is located at the front of the building beside the main entrance, or by the gazebo.

All participants coming into the Transitional Living Program are required to sign a Smoke Free Unit Declaration, failure to abide by these rules could result in a discharge from the program.

SUBSTANCE USE

Traverse Independence uses a client-centred and harm reduction approach. Abstinence is strongly recommended for individuals; however, it is understood that clients vary in their needs and rehabilitative journey. Substance use and alcohol are not permitted on the premises of either of the Transitional Living sites. Traverse Independence will consult with additional addiction and/or community supports that specialize in substance use harm reduction approaches as required.

Substance use should not impact the ability of a participant to engage with supports, and it should not impact other clients' health, safety, and programming. The focus of harm-reduction within Traverse Independence is to decrease the negative consequences of substance use by meeting participants "where they're at" and encouraging users to work with peers, addiction support services, medical and social services in a non-judgemental and inclusive approach.

WEAPONS

Possession of a weapon is prohibited while on Traverse Independence premises.

Weapons: firearms, knives, blades, explosives, chemical hazards that cause bodily harm or any other item used with the intent of threatening or injuring another person.

Traverse Independence has adopted a weapons policy to ensure that we minimize the threat of injuries associated with weapons on the premises for the health and safety of employees, participants, and visitors.

ELOPEMENT & LEAVING OF SITE WITHOUT LETTING STAFF KNOW

Participants are expected to be onsite from 10pm to 8am daily, unless previously agreed upon with the Service Coordinator. If a participant leaves the site without letting staff know, staff will treat this as a participant elopement and follow the protocol outlined in the Traverse Independence Elopement Policy and Procedure.

HOUSEHOLD ORGANIZATION AND MAINTENANCE

CLEANING

All participants will be involved with a cleaning routine, which will be created once admitted to the Transitional Living Program. This will include daily cleaning routines after meal preparation, as well as weekly cleaning and tidying the kitchen, living space, bathroom, and bedroom. Participants are expected to clean their fridge and stove every six months.

GARBAGE

All participants of the Transitional Living Program are required to maintain their units in accordance with Traverse Health and Safety Standards. This includes regularly removing their own garbage and recycling unless mobility challenges prevent them from doing so. During the intake process, staff will provide participants with information and guidance on where and how to properly dispose of their garbage.

LAUNDRY

Laundry facilities are located at both sites.

Participants at the Fergus location have access to laundry units on their floor and will be assigned a laundry card upon move in. Participant laundry cards can be kept in the staff office if requested. Participants will require regular access to a debit or credit card to add funds to their laundry card.

Participants at the Stanley Ave program have access to laundry facilities in the basement, which are coin operated with a minimal charge of \$1 per load for each the washer and dryer.

PROPERTY DAMAGE

There may be times when staff will handle some of participants personal items, for instance a cooking utensil or a hairbrush. We expect staff to be careful and respectful in participants home but sometimes things may get broken accidentally. If this happens, please report it to the service coordinator right away. Please note that Traverse Independence cannot replace items, and this is a risk participants take while receiving service. If an item is important, do not let staff use it or caution them to be extra careful. In the case of laundry, instructions for special care items must be provided.

If the participant has concerns that they feel has not been addressed appropriately by the site staff, participants may file a complaint through the Complaints Process (Policy SD-1150) which will be responded to accordingly.

Traverse Independence understands that accidents happen. Should something get damaged, please report it to the service coordinator right away as participants may be held responsible for damages.

Should a participant, through intentional actions of vandalism, misconduct, cause damage, or destruction to any property owned or leased by Traverse Independence, the participant will be held financially responsible for all costs associated with the repair or replacement of the damaged property. Depending on the severity and circumstances of the damage, the participant may also be immediately discharged from the Transitional Living Program.

PROGRAM INSURANCE

Traverse Independence strongly encourages that all program participants purchase insurance for their care unit for the duration of the program length. The program participant agrees that the - Traverse Independence - is not responsible for any damage/theft or loss that may occur to the program participants personal possessions while participating in the Transitional Living Program. Additionally, participants voluntarily assume full responsibility for any risk, loss, or property damage related to the care unit.

At Traverse Independence we make several efforts to safeguard participants personal belongings. We ask that the participant does not bring any valuables to the care unit.

All Participants coming into the program will be asked to review and sign a Waiver of Tenant Insurance form should the program participant chose to decline Program Insurance.

PET CARE AND ANIMAL ACCOMMODATIONS

All pet care must be negotiated in advance and be approved by the Manager and Service Coordinator of the Transitional Living Program. All pet owners must provide proof of vaccinations each year and vaccinations must be kept up to date. Please be aware that many of the employees have allergies, so should participants get a cat or dog it may affect services.

Please note that any animal coming into Traverse must follow Waterloo and Wellington County guidelines.

Please see the policy in the appendix section of this document for the **Traverse Independence Pet Care Policy and Procedure**.

The following are Pet Care Rules in which the participant must abide by:

- Participants are responsible for all care that their pet may require.
- Participants are responsible for any damage that an animal does to the unit.
- Traverse Independence reserves the right to request that any live-in pet be put in a separate room or in a cage while staff are present in the care unit.
- Participants are responsible for ensuring that all applicable shots are up to date, a copy of vaccination status will be required upon admission and to be updated annually.
- Participants agree to keep the pet on a leash at all times when outside of the unit.
- Participants are responsible for picking up after their pet while outside the building and disposing of waste in the dumpster located outside of the building.
- As per the rules set by building management, participants agree to not bring any animals onto the elevators while other persons are present.
- Participants are responsible for reading and adhering to all applicable municipal animal bylaws.

SATISFACTION/QUALITY

SATISFACTION SURVEYS

Each year we send satisfaction surveys to participants and their family and support persons. These surveys provide participants the opportunity to share their thoughts on the services received and how improvements can be made.

PARTICIPANT'S RIGHT TO FILE A COMPLAINT

Participants have the right to file a formal complaint at any time. This can do this by speaking directly with the service coordinator or manager of the program. It is their responsibility to respond quickly to your complaint.

They will meet with you to discuss your concerns and will work with participants to develop a plan to improve the situation if necessary. This will be done privately, and participants should not feel worried about complaining.

If participants are not satisfied with the response from the service coordinator or manager, participants can contact the Health Services Appeal and Review Board (HSARB), which is an independent body that will review complaints.

NEXT STEPS AFTER TRANSITIONAL LIVING

Upon discharge from the Transitional Living Program, the participant may be supported by a Community Facilitator within Waterloo Region and Wellington County. This support is intended to facilitate a smooth transition from the Transitional Living Program to the community.

This support will be based on the Outreach criteria and the support systems available to the participant upon discharge. This will ensure the transition to their new living environment is successful and all recommended services are in place. The Community Facilitator can also assist the participant in change of address, change of pharmacy and with setting up their new location.

You may be asked to participate in a discharge assessment to ensure that you will be well supported following your time in Transitional Living.

TRAVERSE INDEPENDENCE CONTACT INFORMATION

Please access the [Traverse Independence website](#) to find contact information.