

# CARE HOME VERSION

**RISK OF GETTING LOST**



## Low Risk

- Frequent ambulation within the facility
- Frequent ambulation interrupts necessary activities
- Regularly loses one's way indoors



## Medium Risk

- Trespasses into off-limits
- Frequent night ambulation
- States intent to leave/ask for directions on how to leave facility regularly
- Looks at watch frequently
- Regularly contacts someone from outside of facility to pick them up
- Drawing stimulus (i.e., looks out the window frequently)



## High Risk

- Frequent exit door lingering and testing
- Regularly seeks means or opportunity to exit
- Pattern of preparing to go outside (i.e., carrying or holding jacket, putting on extra clothes, carrying bag/purse, looks for car)



## Unplanned Absence

- Lost within the community
- Is missing, has eloped, has lost one's way exterior to care

**STRATEGIES**



- Education and awareness
- Developing a plan of preventative strategies
- Watch for signals seen in medium and high risk
- Design facility that promotes wandering
- Register under a vulnerable persons registry if available\*
- Identification strategies (e.g., ID tags/ kit/ bracelet)\*



- Distraction/redirection strategies
- Exercise with a partner or wear a locating technology



- Locating technologies
- Alarms/surveillance
- Locks and barriers



- **Call 911 immediately**
- Search and rescue methods
- Community involvement,

Can transition to lesser or greater levels of risk at any moment

Need to apply education and proactive strategies as soon as possible so can still encourage **safe** wandering

**NOTE:** Strategies with a star (\*) next to it could be applied to any risk level

## LIST OF AVAILABLE STRATEGIES

### Low Risk

- Keep a list of people to call on for help
- Education and awareness
  - Finding Your Way Program (<http://findingyourwayontario.ca>)
  - Alzheimer Society (<http://alzheimer.ca/en/on>)
- Design facility that promotes wandering (i.e., secured gardens outside and/or inside, lots of room to walk indoors)
- Register participant with the Vulnerable Person Registry (if available) or with an identification program
  - MedicAlert (<https://www.medicalert.ca>)
- Place identification information on items of clothing, or objects they regularly use (i.e., walker, wallet)

### Medium Risk

- Distraction/redirection strategies
  - Providing meaningful activities (i.e. chores, tasks, etc.) or play music that they grew up to
  - Increase staff/resident interactions
  - Install signs to assist in way-finding
  - Provide areas that allow the person to wander (i.e. enclosed gardens, larger areas to walk, etc.)
- Try to understand the underlying causes of wandering and exit seeking behaviour among the resident. Many times, these behaviours are due to certain needs not being met such as them being hungry, lonely, or do not identify the care home as where they live.
- Integrate exercise programs or classes into their everyday routine

### High Risk

- Use devices that signal when a door or window is opened
- Avoid busy places that are confusing and can cause disorientation
- Install door murals (camouflaged exit doors), place mirrors or curtains in front of the exit door
- Consider locating technologies:
  - GPS (<https://tech.findingyourwayontario.ca>)
  - RFID (<https://projectlifesaver.org>)

### Unplanned Absence

- Call 911 immediately DO NOT wait 24-48 hours to alert the police. The police want to know right away about the missing person even if you find them soon after.
- Keep up to date information relating to each resident on hand such as a photo, name, height, weight, physical description and emergency contact information in a safe place such as a binder or computer file. In the event the resident has gone missing this information can be quickly forwarded to the police.
- Notify the community to keep a look out for the missing person