



## FUTURE PLANNING

Planning for the future involves working together as a family to establish long-term financial, housing, health and social support for the person with schizophrenia.

No matter how loving and capable, parents will become less and less able to provide support as they grow older — and no one lives forever.

Parents caring for an adult child may assume that a sibling will take on the responsibilities of care giving after the parents are gone. Others may not have given any thought to the future. Siblings are then faced with the difficult task of arranging care for their brother or sister. Adult children also worry about who will take care of their ill parent. By not developing a plan for the future, families are in danger of jeopardizing the future well-being of all family members.

## HOW DO WE START?

- Holding an informal meeting with all family members to begin talking about future planning is a first step. All family members should be invited, including the person with schizophrenia.

- Learn about independent living options in your community for people with mental illness. The best option is one that offers privacy and a sense of independence, but at the same time provides the supports necessary for the person to live successfully in the community.
- Contact your local mental health services to find out what options are available in your community.
- Prepare a will and create an inventory of all your assets and liabilities. You may want to consider making arrangements in your will for your loved one's care upon your death.
- Consider setting up a discretionary trust for the person that will not jeopardize their disability benefits.
- Look at establishing a personal network of family, friends and others who can form long-lasting relationships with the person. This will help to ensure that the person doesn't become isolated.
- Agencies such as Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network (PLAN) can help with setting up finances, housing, and a social network for the person.

## WHERE CAN WE GET MORE HELP?

The British Columbia Schizophrenia Society (BCSS) is a family-based organization. We understand what it's like to live with schizophrenia.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

#### British Columbia Schizophrenia Society



201 - 6011 Westminster Hwy.  
Richmond, BC V7C 4V4  
Tel: 604-270-7841 Fax: 604-270-9861  
Toll Free: 1-888-888-0029  
bcss.prov@telus.net www.bcss.org

### OUR MISSION:

*"To alleviate the suffering caused by schizophrenia"*

### OUR MANDATE:

- Family support and education
- Public education, awareness and understanding
- Advocacy for better services for people with schizophrenia and their families
- Promote research into the treatment and cure for schizophrenia

Partners in Care



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[www.janssen-ortho.com](http://www.janssen-ortho.com)

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*This information not to be substituted for the advice of a professional.  
Always consult a physician regarding individual circumstances.*



# SCHIZOPHRENIA

## CARING AS A FAMILY



We'd like to  
change  
your  
mind





## CARING AS A FAMILY

When someone is diagnosed with schizophrenia, the whole family — including the ill person — may experience a sense of grief and loss.

Grief can include several stages — shock, denial, confusion, anger, sadness — and finally, acceptance.

## MANAGING FROM DAY TO DAY

Living with any chronic illness is likely to change your day-to-day life. Understanding the facts about schizophrenia and recognizing the impact it may have on your family will help.

- Get the facts. Help the ill person and other family members to learn as much as you can about the illness.
- Talk to professionals, other family members and friends. Some of them may want to be involved in helping.
- Get in touch with your local BC Schizophrenia Society. Ask about support groups, education programs, and other helpful resources. Visit our website at [www.bcscs.org](http://www.bcscs.org)

## PARENTS AND SPOUSES

More than 50% of people with schizophrenia live with their families. If families are not well informed, they can be overwhelmed by the experience of dealing with the illness.

Self-care is very important — even crucial. When you neglect your own needs, you risk burning out and being unable to help anyone.

- Don't let the illness take over your life. Outside activities are essential to maintaining your health.
- Daily routines should be maintained. Family life should be kept as normal as possible. Make time for hobbies, social events and other activities you enjoy
- It is important that other family members and friends are not neglected
- Join a family support group. Other families can help you find ways to cope with things that bother you
- Have a plan for crisis situations. It may never be needed, but it's always best to be prepared
- If you feel you can't cope with the impact of the illness, do not hesitate to ask for help
- Mental illness can disrupt a couple's love, companionship, intimacy and partnership of marriage
- Learn to separate the illness from the person

## SIBLINGS

All family members are affected when schizophrenia strikes in a family. Siblings are often the first ones to notice that “something is not right”.

As a brother and sister you may:

- Have fears that you too will develop schizophrenia
- Be uncomfortable or embarrassed about the illness
- Feel you have lost your best friend
- Resent the time your parents spend with your ill sibling
- Stop bringing friends home
- Distance yourself from the family
- Feel guilty that you have a better life than your brother or sister
- Worry about your parents, and feel you must be perfect to make up for what they have lost in your sibling

## YOUNG CHILDREN OF PARENTS WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA

Children have more limited coping skills and are more dependent on adults to help them deal with the often confusing and sometimes frightening home situation.

Young children's needs include:

- Continuity of care and least disruption to home and school when a parent is hospitalized
- Age appropriate information about mental illness
- Someone that the child can talk to about fears, guilt, and confusion
- Programs where children can meet with other children
- A safety network (list of names and telephone numbers of caring adults) for the child to call if they need help.

## ADULT CHILDREN

As a result of their experience with mental illness, adult children often carry an enormous personal legacy that permeates their lives.

As an adult child you may have:

- Concern about care giving for your parent as they get older
  - Difficulty balancing personal and family needs
  - A sense that your own needs have not been met
  - Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness
  - Poor self-esteem
  - Guilt feelings
  - \* Psychological “numbness”
  - \* Problems trusting and with intimacy
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