



# **Adult Companionship Services Directory**

**A Resource Guide for Service Providers**

# Adult Companionship Services Directory

---

## A Resource Guide for Service Providers

### Overview

Welcome to the Adult Companionship Services Directory! This is a go-to reference for University of Manitoba student service providers seeking a meaningful and fulfilling adult companionship experience.

The ACS Directory is a digital platform developed exclusively with the UM community in mind and its goal is to provide companionship services for older adults. The directory will serve as the centralized hub for the student information that individuals and families can view to access services and post job opportunities.

Here are just some key reasons why companionship for older adults is important:

- **Emotional Support** – helps older adults feel valued, understood, and connected by having someone to talk to, share experiences with, and express feelings to, which can alleviate feelings of loneliness and isolation.
- **Mental Stimulation** – helps to maintain mental acuity and prevent cognitive decline in older adults through conversations, activities, and social engagement.
- **Physical Health** – helps to encourage older adults to stay active and maintain a healthy lifestyle by having someone to participate in leisure activities with to increase quality of life, promote physical well-being, and achieve overall health benefits.

Companionship plays a crucial role in the well-being and quality of life for older adults. It facilitates social interaction and engagement, which is essential for maintaining connections, building relationships, and combating feelings of isolation. Participating in social activities with a companion can enhance quality of life and promote overall health. The presence of a companion in the home can provide an older adult with a sense of reassurance and comfort.

#### References:

Government of Canada. (2016-07-20). [Report on the Social Isolation of Seniors - Canada.ca](#)  
Harvard Medical School. (2023-12-07). [Protecting against cognitive decline - Harvard Health](#)  
Canadian Coalition for Seniors' Mental Health. [Social Isolation and Loneliness in Older Adults - \(ccsmh.ca\)](#)  
Institute on Aging. [The Importance of Companionship For Seniors: Socialization and Better Health - Institute on Aging \(ioaging.org\)](#)

# What is an Adult Companionship Service?

Adult companionship can encompass a wide range of activities that are tailored to support and meet the social, emotional, and practical needs of those in your care. These services aim to enhance the lives of older adults in a compassionate and personalized manner.

## Examples:

### **Companionship visits**

Visiting regularly to check-in or making scheduled phone calls is especially beneficial to those who live alone.

### **Social interaction**

Engaging in conversations, reminiscing, and sharing stories to provide companionship and alleviate feelings of loneliness and isolation.

### **Emotional support**

Offering a listening ear, emotional support, and encouragement to assist with navigating through life transitions, challenges, and changes.

### **Recreational activities**

Participating in activities such as going for neighborhood walks, reading, listening to music, doing puzzles, playing games, making crafts, gardening, cooking, or baking to stimulate cognitive and fine motor function.

### **Assistance with daily tasks**

Preparing tea or coffee and some light snacks, making the bed, taking out the garbage, carrying groceries inside are just some of the ways to help that will have an impact.

### **Escort during errands, appointment, or outings**

Providing transportation and accompanying to medical appointments, grocery shopping, social outings, or recreational activities.

### **Extra help around the home**

Offering additional services such as washing and folding laundry, light housekeeping, home organization, meal preparation, snow shoveling, yard work, pet care, etc.

**Note:** Try to refrain from participating in rigorous physical activities (such as exercising or playing sports) with the client as this could lead to injury.

# Become a Service Provider

Are you interested in joining the Adult Companionship Services (ACS) Directory?

Becoming a service provider can be a rewarding experience, allowing you to provide companionship to older adults, participate in intergenerational connections, and contribute to the UM community. You can choose to be a service provider on either a **paid** or **volunteer basis**.

To begin your journey as a companionship service provider, there are some key steps in the registration process.

## General Process

1. You can register to join the directory by sending your cover letter to:  
[FamilyResource@umanitoba.ca](mailto:FamilyResource@umanitoba.ca)
2. You will receive a request to complete the **Adult Companionship Services Directory – Profile Entry Form – Service Provider** via MS Forms.
3. Once your form has been submitted and reviewed by the Family Resource Coordinator, you will receive a link to request access to view the directory.
4. Service providers have a choice to wait until they receive a call from a client, or they can view the available job postings on the directory and contact the client directly.
5. During your initial contact, you and the client can proceed to arrange an interview/meetup.

**i Note:** The Adult Companionship Services (ACS) Directory Profile Form on MS Forms will have questions that will not be displayed on the directory. This is to maintain some level of privacy for the students. Clients may ask you the same questions during the hiring process.

**i Important:** According to the UM International Centre, international students are responsible for reviewing, understanding, and following requirements set forth by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to work off-campus during their studies. It is also important that international students review how the University of Manitoba defines full-time status to maintain compliance with IRCC and to understand how the institution defines full-time and part-time status, at the undergraduate and graduate levels. For more information on this, please visit [Working in Canada as an international student - Canada.ca](#) and [Immigration information | University of Manitoba \(umanitoba.ca\)](#)

# Prepare for your first meeting

Once a client has contacted you, prepare for your first meeting by either asking questions in advance or come to the meeting with your questions ready. Meeting in person can be done in the client's home or a designated public meeting place. It is a great way for you to establish a connection with the client and make a good first impression!

A client can either be the individual (UM student or employee) or their family member that you will be providing companionship services for.

Asking clients questions before providing companionship services is important for the following reasons:

- ✓ Understanding the client's specific needs
- ✓ Building rapport with the client
- ✓ Personalization of services
- ✓ Ensuring safety of the client and yourself
- ✓ Achieving the client's companionship goals
- ✓ Communication and engagement
- ✓ Sensitivity to cultural or religious beliefs

## Sample Questions to Ask Your Clients:

- What specific needs does the client have?
- Are there any medical conditions or mobility issues that I should be aware of?
- What are the individual's interests, hobbies, and preferences in terms of activities and social interactions?
- Is there a preferred schedule or routine that the individual follows that I should accommodate?
- Are there any dietary restrictions or preferences that I should consider when planning meals or snacks?
- How does the individual prefer to communicate and engage in conversations?
- Are there any cultural or religious practices that I should be respectful and mindful of?
- Is there a specific goal or outcome that the family or individual hopes to achieve through the companionship services?
- Are there any pets in the household?
- Are there any specific safety or emergency protocols that I need to know when providing companionship services?
- What is the parking situation like? Is there a bus stop close by?
- How would you like me to communicate if I am going to be late or cannot make it in?

## References:

Alto. [Questions for Caregivers to Ask their Clients — alto \(findalto.com\)](https://findalto.com)

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. Are there any requirements to apply as a service provider?

Certifications like first aid and CPR, clean criminal record and vulnerable sector checks, food handlers certificate, or other relevant training/work experience are considered an asset or preferred, but are not required.

*\*International students are responsible for ensuring that they are compliant with IRCC's regulations with regard to working while studying in Canada.*

## 2. Why is there an option of a volunteer or paid service?

The ACS Directory is an equal opportunity-based initiative. This platform allows clients to access the paid service based on their ability to pay (financial circumstances). While this is primarily a paid service, students may choose to volunteer their time. Whether paid or volunteer, the ACS is for students looking to give back to the community and bolster their intergenerational experience as it pertains to their studies.

## 3. If I choose the paid-based service route, how will I get paid and how much can I charge as my rate?

All work-related agreements will be made between the client and service provider. We suggest that details such as date of service required, hours of service needed, rate of pay, and method of payment are discussed prior to services provided and to have the agreement in writing. This will help to reduce miscommunication and misunderstandings from occurring.

## 4. Will the University of Manitoba be considered my employer?

No, the University will not be considered your employer. The ACS Directory serves as the centralized hub where clients can view all service provider profiles to contact and request for service.

## 5. Why do I need to provide my UM student number and email address to register?

We ask for your student number to ensure professional conduct and email address so that we are able to send you the profile form (MS Forms) to complete. The forms can only be filled out by those who are part of the UM organization as a security measure.

## 6. Where is the directory housed and in what format?

The ACS Directory is housed in a private Team channel and only service providers who have filled out the **Adult Companionship Services Directory – Profile Entry Form – Service Provider** will receive access. The directory itself is a locked Excel workbook where participants can view the directory.

## 7. What type of information will be displayed?

The Excel workbook will have 2 worksheets: **Service Providers** and **Job Listings**

'Service provider' sheet will show:

- Names of students
- Student email addresses
- Preferred work locations

- Availability
- Certifications and other relevant training
- Additional services they are willing to provide
- Volunteer or Paid Employment-based
- Residency status
- Language(s) spoken
- Comments

'Job listings' sheet will show:

- First name of clients
- Client email address
- Volunteer or Paid Employment-based
- Work location
- Frequency
- Start date
- No. of hours
- Time of day
- Additional services requested
- Language(s) spoken
- Comments

#### 8. Will I have access to my information in the directory?

Your information will be manually entered into the ACS Directory by the Family Resource Coordinator. You will need to send a request via email to make any changes to your profile.

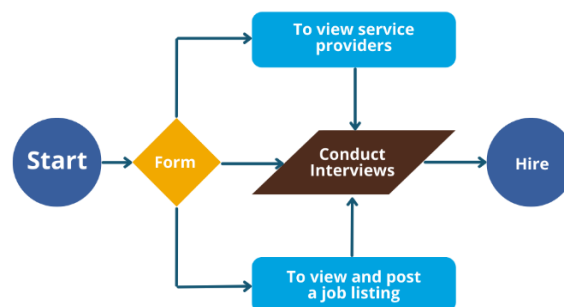
#### 9. Why are the categories on the directory so limited?

We have intentionally kept the categories on the Adult Companionship Services (ACS) Directory limited for a more streamlined view of the spreadsheet and to maintain a level of privacy for the student service providers. Clients can ask the service providers more specific questions during the interview process.

#### 10. What are the ways to clients can contact me?

There are 2 ways to connect with a client. The first way is providing your profile information to have it listed on the directory. The second way is viewing the available job listings, once your profile is up. From there, you can contact the clients yourself via the email address they have provided. Some job opportunities will be available to view via the directory. Some clients may also choose to contact you directly.

## ACS Directory Process



**11. I am under 18 years of age but attend the University of Manitoba. Can I still register to be a service provider?**

At this time, we are limiting the age of service providers to those who are 18 years and older.

**12. Can I ask the client for a reference letter?**

Yes, you can ask the client to provide you with a reference letter, but they are not obligated to give one.

**13. What if later on, I want my information removed?**

Simply contact the Family Resource Coordinator and your information will be removed from the directory.

**14. What if I have some suggestions or feedback?**

The ACS Directory will have a chat feature where you can post any suggestions or ideas. Your input is valuable to us, and you are more than welcome to also contact us directly via email [FamilyResource@umanitoba.ca](mailto:FamilyResource@umanitoba.ca).



# Other Resources

## **Basics and benefits of companionship care**

[Companion Care - Comfort Keepers](#)  
[Home | Targeting Isolation](#)

## **Other**

[Home | Targeting Isolation](#)  
[Facts on aging | Centre on Aging | University of Manitoba \(umanitoba.ca\)](#)  
[Resources for Service Providers | Winnipeg Regional Health Authority \(wrha.mb.ca\)](#)

## **Recreation ideas**

[Senior Citizen Activities Ideas - YouTube](#)

# Examples of what this type of companionship service does not include:

## Personal care services

- Transferring/lifting
- Shower and tub assistance
- Stand-by assistance
- Dressing and feeding
- Bathroom and incontinence assistance

## Nursing care services

- Medication set-up and administration
- Vital signs monitoring
- Reporting to health care providers

## Other home care services

- Transitions from hospital to home
- Hospice support
- Nutrition planning

**i Important:** The companionship service is not meant to be a replacement for personal, home, or nursing care and other services which are provided by professionals. ***\*Anything related to care performed by professionals should not be attempted by the student service provider, even if they have training in that area.***

## CONTACT US

UM FAMILY RESOURCES

Email: [FamilyResource@umanitoba.ca](mailto:FamilyResource@umanitoba.ca)

Webpage: [Family resources | University of Manitoba \(umanitoba.ca\)](http://Familyresources|UniversityofManitoba(umanitoba.ca))

Instagram: [umfamilyresources](https://www.instagram.com/umfamilyresources)