

# Dining Rooms

Research and Recommendations  
for Long-Term Care



## A Room with a View!

The atmosphere of a dining room can affect how much we eat and how well we enjoy the experience. For residents in long-term care, it is important to make dining rooms feel welcoming, comfortable, and enjoyable at mealtimes.

### Research Study:

#### Making the Most of Mealtimes (M3)

M3 is a national study that looked at what residents in long-term care eat and drink, and what factors promote better nutrition. This page shares some of the findings from over 600 residents who participated in the study.

## WHAT DID WE LEARN?



Residents ate more when team members (staff) interacted socially with them and focused on their needs.



Residents living in dementia-care environments ate more than residents living in other areas of the home. More research is needed to understand why, but it may be due to differences in staff training, home policies, or how the environment was designed.



Overall, researchers rated the social and physical environment of dining rooms between 5 and 6 (out of 8), with 8 representing an ideal environment.

# WHAT CAN WE DO?

## To Enhance the Physical Environment



Try to provide opportunities for residents to dine with a nice view.  
For example, looking over a garden.



Ensure there is enough light for residents to see what is on their plate.  
Be mindful of glare on flooring and tabletops.



Reduce obstacles and clutter that could get in the way  
of residents moving around the dining room.



Post the menu somewhere easy for residents to see.



Provide a clock in the dining area so that residents  
can tell when it is time for meals.



Ask residents about and respect their dining preferences.  
For example, ask if the temperature, lighting and noise levels are alright.

## To Enhance the Social Environment



Greet residents by their name.



Sit down with residents, even if it is just for a few moments.



Play music that residents enjoy during mealtimes.



Plan a themed or special dinner for residents.



Engage socially with residents, especially those who need assistance with  
eating and those who do not use words to express themselves.

## Learn More!

Explore helpful tools and resources for improving mealtimes at: [www.the-ria.ca](http://www.the-ria.ca)

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