

The Five Stages of a Call to the Seniors Information Phone Line

The Seniors Information Phone Line is a free, confidential phone service that seniors, their family members or caregivers can call anytime, 24/7, to find out about supports for seniors. Calls are answered by an Information and Referral Specialist (I&R Specialist) at 211 Edmonton who can refer to a wide range of community, social, health and government services.

To reach the Seniors Information Phone Line, dial 2-1-1 and select option 2.

Stage One: Establish Rapport

When you call the Seniors Information Phone Line, an I&R Specialist will listen closely and ask questions to try to understand your situation. Whether you are seeking help with financial needs, housing, health concerns, food, or material goods such as clothing and furniture, the I&R Specialist will try to find resources that meet your needs.

Stage Two: Assessment

Needs Assessment

In this stage, an I&R Specialist will assess your personal needs. For example, if you called looking for help with food, the I&R Specialist might refer you to a local food bank. The I&R Specialist will also ask questions about whether you would be able to access that service. For example, if you don't have access to transportation, the I&R Specialist needs to know to give you referrals to a ride program or grocery delivery service. In order to give you the best possible referrals, the I&R Specialist may ask about your age, general location, income, awareness of seniors benefits, health circumstances, mobility issues, access to transportation, preferred language, previous use of services, and ability to pay for services.

Risk Assessment

If an I&R Specialist senses you may be at risk of harm, he or she will probe deeper into the situation with a risk assessment. For example, if you state that your adult daughter isn't treating you well, the I&R Specialist will check into whether you are currently safe and assess your risk of experiencing elder abuse. The I&R Specialist will work with you to create a safety plan that includes referrals to services that help keep elders safe from abuse. I&R Specialists complete risk assessments anytime a caller mentions someone at risk of suicide, abuse, or assault.

Stage Three: Information and Referral

After the assessment stage, it's time for the I&R Specialist to provide you with the information and referrals you requested. You will be provided with any information required to access the services. This may include phone numbers, addresses, and hours of operation.

Stage Four: Advocacy

During this stage, the I&R Specialist will ensure you clearly understand how to access the referrals you have been given. The I&R Specialist may provide you with some coaching on how to access services or provide a referral to an outreach worker or agency that specifically helps seniors navigate services. The I&R Specialist will make sure you are comfortable calling back with further questions. If you need additional support your call will be transferred to an outreach worker at a senior's agency in your community.

Stage Five: Follow-Up

The I&R Specialist may offer you a follow-up call. If you accept follow-up service, an I&R Specialist will phone you back about a week after your initial call to check into whether you got the help you needed. If you had difficulty accessing services, the I&R Specialist will provide you with further referrals or coaching as needed.

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