

Ministry of
Long-Term Care

Update to Visits at Long-Term Care Homes



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Introduction

On June 10, 2020, the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) issued an update to Directive #3. The update included the first step in the gradual resumption of visits to long-term care homes. To continue to support long-term care residents, the ministry is proposing a further step in reopening homes to visitors guided by the following principles:

- **Safety:** Any approach to visiting must balance the health and safety needs of residents, staff, and visitors, and ensure risks are mitigated.
- **Emotional Well-being:** Allowing visitors is intended to support the emotional well-being of residents by reducing any potential negative impacts related to social isolation.
- **Equitable Access:** All individuals seeking to visit a resident must be given equitable visitation access, consistent with resident preference and within reasonable restrictions that safeguard residents.
- **Flexibility:** The physical/infrastructure characteristics of the long-term care home, its staffing availability, and the current status of the home with respect to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) are all variables to take into account when setting home-specific policies.

Visitors should consider their personal health and susceptibility to the virus in determining whether visiting a long-term care home is appropriate. Where it is not possible or advisable for in-person visits homes should continue to provide virtual visiting options.

As the pandemic situation evolves in Ontario, this direction regarding visits at long-term care homes will be adjusted as necessary, keeping the safety and emotional well-being of residents and staff at the forefront.

This document is being issued to provide updated guidance to long-term care homes and is intended to supplement Directive #3. To the extent that anything in this document conflicts with the Directive, the Directive prevails, and long-term care homes must take all reasonable steps to follow the Directive.

Home Requirements

The following baseline requirements for the home must be met prior to the home being able to accept any visitors:

1. The long-term care home must **NOT** be currently in outbreak.
 - a) In the event that a home enters into an outbreak, all non-essential visitations must end. Homes must establish compliance with all CMOH directives for homes in outbreak and follow directions from the local Public Health Unit (PHU).
 - b) Essential visits will still be allowed for homes in outbreak and any visitors must qualify under those rules.
 - c) Homes are encouraged to consult with their local PHU as to whether temporary cessation of visits is warranted if there is a steady increase in local community cases of COVID.
2. The home has developed procedures for the resumption of visits and a process for communicating these procedures with residents, families, visitors and staff, including but not limited to infection prevention and control (IPAC), scheduling and any setting-specific policies.
 - a) The process must include sharing an information package with visitors on IPAC, masking and other operational procedures such as limiting movement around the home, if applicable, and ensuring visitors' agreement to comply. Home materials must include an approach to dealing with non-adherence to home policies and procedures, including the discontinuation of visits.
 - b) Homes must ensure protocols are in place to maintain the highest of IPAC standards prior to, during and after visits.
 - c) Each home should create and maintain a list of visitors. The list will be available for relevant/appropriate staff members to access.

Definitions

Staff – those employed by long-term care homes, including agency members

On-site contractors – those who provide scheduled contracted services to the home. Examples may include hair-dressing, foot care etc.

Essential visitors – as defined in Directive #3 – include a person performing essential support services (e.g., food delivery, inspector, maintenance, or health care services (e.g., phlebotomy)) or a person visiting a very ill or palliative resident.

Essential caregivers – individuals who are not staff, essential visitors nor on-site contractors that provide care services to one resident at a home. In many cases, these essential caregivers are family members.

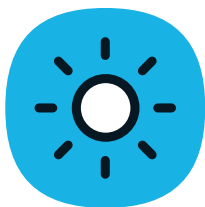
Visitors – individuals coming to the home to see a resident who do not fall into another category.

Visitor Requirements

3. Prior to each visit, the visitor must:

- a) Pass an active screening questionnaire administered by home staff.
- b) For indoor visits, visitors are required to verbally attest to home staff that they have tested negative for COVID-19 within the previous two weeks and not subsequently tested positive. The home is not responsible for providing the testing. Attestation of testing is not required for outdoor visits.
- c) Comply with long-term care home infection prevention and control (IPAC) protocols, including proper use of face coverings or surgical/procedural masks.
 - (i) Visitors should use a face covering if the visit is outdoors. If the visit is indoors, a surgical/procedure mask must be worn at all times.

- (ii) Visitors are responsible for bringing their own face covering for outside visits. The home is responsible for supplying surgical/procedure masks to indoor visitors and to outdoor visitors who do not have a face covering. Homes should avoid accessing the provincial pandemic stockpile for this purpose.
- (iii) Any non-adherence to these rules will be the basis for discontinuation of visits.

**Outdoor Visiting
+ Indoor Visiting****Type of Visit: Outdoor****Effective Date:** Immediately, July 15, 2020**Number of Visitors* Allowed:** Up to 2 visitors a time.**Scheduling of Visits Required:**

Homes should establish practices that:

1. Provide meaningful and equitable access to visits for all residents; and,
2. Consider the staffing and space capacity available to the home to maintain safety of residents, staff and visitors.

Homes will have discretion in scheduling and must take into account the directives in place at the time and whether the visitor is an essential caregiver (e.g. supports with feeding etc.)

Homes may regulate the number of visitors to the home at any one time.

Type of Visit: Indoor**Effective Date:** One week post approval, July 22, 2020**Number of Visitors* Allowed:** Up to 2 visitors a time.**Scheduling of Visits Required:**

Homes should establish practices that:

1. Provide meaningful and equitable access to visits for all residents; and,
2. Consider the staffing and space capacity available to the home to maintain safety of residents, staff and visitors.

** Visitor is defined as any family member, close friend or neighbour*

Homes will have discretion in scheduling and must take into account the directives in place at the time and whether the visitor is an essential caregiver (e.g. supports with feeding etc.)

Homes may regulate the number of visitors to the home at any one time.

VISITOR INFORMATION-PROTOCOLS (WEBSITE) (ON)

Outdoor/Indoor Visiting Guidelines

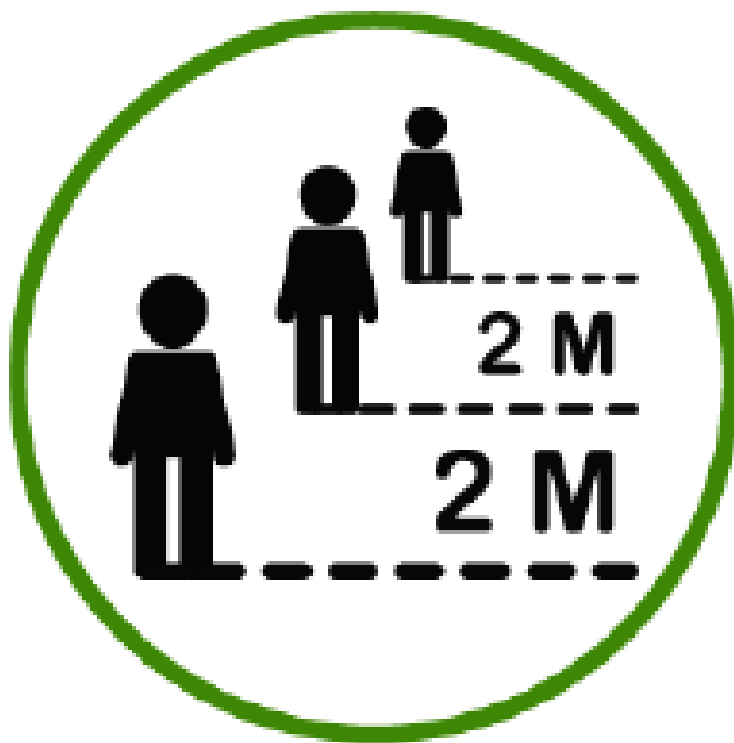
During the COVID-19 pandemic, the health and safety of our residents, families, team members, and visitors remains our top priority. The presence of family and friends is important to the emotional wellbeing of our residents and we recognize the importance of in-person visits. The following guidelines will support safe, physically distanced outdoor and indoor visits for family members to visit and engage with their loved ones.

What you need to know:

- Outdoor and indoor visits will be permitted only when the care community is not in an outbreak, where the resident is asymptomatic and not self-isolating
- Outdoor and indoor visits will be pre-scheduled (30 minute sessions) during the hours of 11a.m-4:15p.m and take place at the **Rose Garden Courtyard outside** or the **Main Lounge inside** of the care community
- Visits outdoors will be accommodated as weather permits
- Indoor visits will be accommodated in designated areas within the care community
- To ensure that every family has an opportunity to visit their loved one, frequency of visits will be based on equitable availability to accommodate one visit per week
- Only two visitors are permitted to visit with a resident during any scheduled visit. The Power of Attorney/Substitute Decision Maker will determine who may visit
- For all indoor visits, visitors must attest to (confirm) having a negative COVID-19 test result that is dated within 14 days of the visit taking place. For outdoor visits, visitors do not need to attest to having a negative COVID 19 test result.
- All visitors must be 18 years or older to ensure precautions are followed
- All visitors will receive education on the care community's infection prevention and control measures, including hand hygiene and use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- PPE (mask) must worn appropriately during the scheduled visit. PPE should not be removed at any time during the visit. For outdoor visits, visitors are encouraged to bring their own masks. Masks will be provided in the event visitors do not have their own. For indoor visits, surgical/procedure masks must be worn throughout the visits. Visitors will be provided with a mask when entering the care community.
- All visitors must comply with the care community's infection prevention and control measures and will be actively screened, including temperature checks
- For the safety of our residents and team members, any visitor who is on self-isolation, awaiting COVID-19 test results, or is positive for COVID-19 will not be permitted to visit
- With the exception of service dogs, animals should not accompany visitors during scheduled visits
- Visitors must adhere to the outdoor/indoor visiting guidelines for the safety of our residents. Should any resident develop COVID-19 symptoms, they will be tested for the virus and placed in isolation pending test results
- A team member will be available to escort you to the designated visiting location
- It is requested that no items be shared with your loved one during the visit (food, letters, cards, etc.)
- Visitors must adhere to a safe physical distance of six feet from the resident and team members during the scheduled visit
- **Non-compliance with the care community's visiting policy and guidelines could result in a discontinuation of visits for the non-compliant visitor**

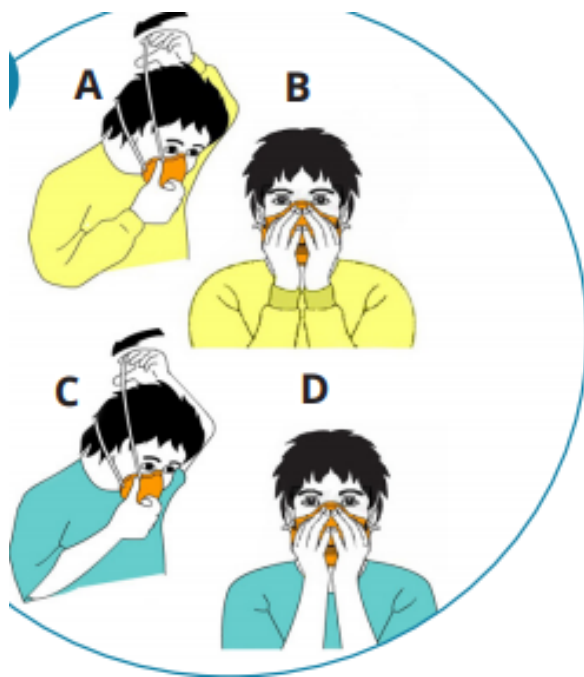
Breakdown of events during 30-minute scheduled visit:

1. Visitor must remain in their vehicle until the start time of their scheduled visit.
2. Visitor will then proceed to the designated greeting area.
3. Visitor will be greeted by a team member at the designated greeting area and will be screened and will receive education on infection prevention and control measures (5 to 10 minutes).
4. Hand hygiene will take place.
5. Team member will then escort the visitor to the designated meeting area to visit with their loved one.
6. Visit with resident will take place (30 minutes).
7. Visits will be facilitated by a team member to ensure the visiting guidelines are being adhered to while ensuring privacy for the visitor and resident.
8. Team member will escort visitor from the designated meeting area at the end of the visit.
9. Hand hygiene will take place.
10. Visitor will proceed to their vehicle.

Physical Distancing:

Maintain physical distancing between all others, including the resident, team members and other visitors.

Donning and Doffing PPE:

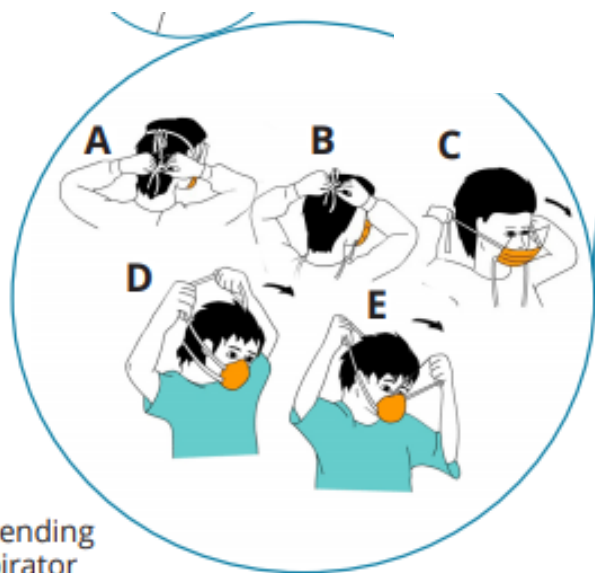


Put on Mask/N95 Respirator

- Place mask over nose and under chin
- Secure ties, loops or straps
- Mould metal piece to your nose bridge
- For respirators, perform a seal-check

Remove Mask/N95 Respirator

- Ties/ear loops/straps are considered 'clean' and may be touched with hands
- The front of the mask/respirator is considered to be contaminated
- Untie bottom tie then top tie, or grasp straps or ear loops
- Pull forward off the head, bending forward to allow mask/respirator to fall away from the face
- Discard immediately into waste receptacle



Hand Hygiene:

To clean hands properly, rub all parts of the hands and wrists with an alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water. Pay special attention to fingertips, between fingers, backs of hands and base of the thumbs.

How to handrub (preferred method)

Rub hands for 15 seconds



1 Apply 1 to 2 pumps of product to palms of dry hands.



2 Rub hands together, palm to palm.



3 Rub in between and around fingers.



4 Rub back of each hand with palm of other hand.



5 Rub fingertips of each hand in opposite palm.



6 Rub each thumb clasped in opposite hand.



7 Rub hands until product is dry. Do not use paper towels.



8 Once dry, your hands are safe.

How to handwash (when hands are visibly soiled)

Lather hands for 15 seconds



1 Wet hands with warm water.



2 Apply soap.



3 Lather soap and rub hands palm to palm.



4 Rub in between and around fingers.



5 Rub back of each hand with palm of other hand.



6 Rub fingertips of each hand in opposite palm.



7 Rub each thumb clasped in opposite hand.



8 Rinse thoroughly under running water.



9 Pat hands dry with paper towel.



10 Turn off water using paper towel.



11 Your hands are now safe.



JUST CLEAN
YOUR HANDS