

COVID-19 Outbreak update

As you all hopefully know, (x) is in a respiratory outbreak with COVID-19. We have had 2 positive cases.

I know you are all very concerned about your loved ones – we will try to update you daily with any new changes within the entire facility. We will contact you by phone if there are any issues with your loved one. If you don't hear from us – please assume that they are doing well and functioning as they typically do – with their known ups and downs (as we all have!).

We met with the Management Team, Medical Director, and the Public Health Unit this morning to ensure we are doing what we can to keep everyone safe – both residents and staff.

I have been in contact with many family members and have been recording frequently asked questions. Below are the questions and answers that we have for you currently. As most of you are aware, advice around the management of COVID-19 can change on a daily (or hourly....) basis. Do not be surprised if current advice changes over the course of this outbreak.

We are all working very hard to keep life running smoothly so we are asking that you limit your emails/phone calls to the Management Team and Charge Nurse to those things that are truly urgent.

Thank you for all your support, words of encouragement and mostly for your trust in our ability to see us all through this – please remember all of us in your prayers.

Sincerely,

Wendy Dunn, NP

How will we be able to communicate with the staff?

We will try to send a quick email update daily over the course of the outbreak. We will inform you via telephone of any changes/updates if your loved one has tested positive. We will only be contacting one member of the family – the POA that we have had on record since admission. We ask that you communicate amongst your families as we cannot honour multiple phone calls at this time.

Will I be able to visit my loved one if they become sick?

No – our “no visitation restriction” exists as per legislation and outbreak procedure. If your loved one becomes more critically ill – we will be in touch. This will be determined on a case by case basis. We will continue to support you with the current social connections through our recreation department. If you are not “connected” please contact (x).

Are all staff and residents going to be swabbed?

We will continue to take our direction from the Public Health Unit. Only symptomatic residents and staff will be swabbed – symptoms include fever, cough and difficulty breathing. We will NOT be swabbing all residents within the Home and staff. Every person entering the facility is being screened, a temperature

taken on entering and exit and given the appropriate PPE and training on its use. Residents are being formally screened with a temperature and we are monitoring residents closely for any condition changes.

Do you have enough PPE (gowns, masks, face shields, gloves)?

We – as all other LTC Homes – are in the same situation with limited supply of PPE. We currently do have enough to provide care, and this is being monitored and reported to the appropriate bodies on a daily basis. Our CEO has made this his top priority.

Staffing/routines on the units?

We are attempting to limit staff to certain areas of the Home knowing that as this progresses, we may not be able to completely meet this goal. We have organized individual staff rooms for breaks within the Home to separate staffing during their shift. Residents are encouraged to stay in their rooms for all care and meals. As you know this is very difficult for some residents with dementia and we will do what we can to keep them safe. All meals will be taken to their rooms and if they are in the dining rooms, we are practicing social distancing and only those who are asymptomatic will be there.

What is the involvement with the residents living in the apartments?

We have had no apartment residents in the home for over 2 weeks when we closed the building to visitors. This has been respected well within the facility. They are considered independent living – not formally connected to our LTC and Loft areas of the facility.

Can I take my loved one home?

2 answers to this question:

1. Loft residents – yes. If you are interested in this – please contact (x) and she will share the procedure with you.
2. LTC Home residents – currently if you take your loved one home, you need to understand that you will likely “lose” your bed. Formal discussion would need to occur – please contact (x)

I am a spouse of a resident – are the rules different for me?

No – they are not.

Lastly, how did this happen if there have been no visitors into the facility, if staff have been screened on entering/exiting and we have been following all the guidance from the PHU?

We wish we could answer this question. We are currently tracing all contacts with the effected residents in the Home and hope to understand more in the days to come. Unfortunately, as we are starting to understand, this virus can be carried by people without active symptoms – you can be an “asymptomatic carrier”. This may be, when this is over, the only explanation we have. We will be transparent with you throughout this process and share with you what we can keeping confidentiality in mind for all those parties involved. We ask that you respect this.