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Dear Independent Residents,

Ontario has entered the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of long-term care homes in outbreak has quadrupled in the past month; resident cases in both Long-Term Care and Retirement / Assisted Living are also rising. In response to certain 'hot spots', the Premier announced that as of October 5, only staff, essential caregivers and essential visitors will be permitted in long-term care homes in the GTA and Ottawa.

As an Independent Living resident, we are asking you to consider restricting visits and excursions to help minimize the risk of exposing yourself and your neighbours, some of whom are quite vulnerable, as well as team members.

We ask you consider:

- Limit your trips outside and the number of people you spend time with.
- Be vigilant in observing the recommendations that protect everyone: wear a mask, maintain social distancing, engage in frequent hand hygiene.

We would also like to make you aware that effective Thursday, October 1, we are halting all Short Stay Absences, except for medical appointments for all other residents in our community. Therefore, if you have a family member in Retirement or Long-Term Care home, please become an Essential Caregiver, if you have not already. An Essential Caregiver will continue to have ongoing contact with their loved one.

The decision to halt Short Stay Absences was not made lightly. It reflects an abundance of caution, taking into consideration the tragic impacts on long-time care so far this year. At the same time, we understand how important it is to maintain contact; we do not want to return to the full lockdown situation in the spring.

We will continue to carefully monitor the status of the pandemic in the province and region, as well as review visiting policies and follow provincial guidelines. We know there is the possibility of additional future safety precautions, up to and including restricting visits. However, it is my heartfelt wish to avoid this scenario. To protect everyone's health and safety, please consistently observe the measures we know offer our best opportunity to avoid outbreaks.

Thank you for considering this request. Please, stay safe and help us to ensure the safety of all the residents, their family members and visitors, and the team members.

As a quick reference, below are the guidelines for visiting. Visits are only possible if the Home is not in outbreak. One positive test places the Home in outbreak. Please review the full policy for details.

Visiting in Independent Living – not in outbreak:

Short stay absences, overnight stays away from the campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Symptoms: No swab required • If Symptoms present: swab required • Strongly encouraged to self-isolate for everyone’s safety • Encouraged to have two essential caregivers, per provincial guidelines
Experiencing Symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swab required • 14-day self-isolation • Can have one essential caregiver visiting
Indoor visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend visitor has negative COVID-19 test result within the last 14 days • Limited by Province of Ontario to a maximum of 10 individuals • Recommend masks • Recommend frequent hand hygiene
Outdoor visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swab not required • Masks required (bring your own) • Social distancing required • Recommend frequent hand hygiene
PLEASE NOTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If guidelines are not followed, the resident will have to self-isolate for 14 days, and visits will be suspended • If a visit results in the resident experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, the resident will be tested and self-isolate for 14 days

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Executive Director, or a member of the Leadership Team.

With Kindness,
Steve Pawelko