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Visiting Requirements as per Directive #3 under the Long-Term Care Homes Act

References:

Directive #3 for Long Term Care Homes under the LTCHA. August 25, 2020.

Ministry of Long-Term Care; Resuming Visits in Long-Term Care Homes; Released September 2nd, 2020

Reopening Retirement Homes; Released September 8th, 2020

The goal of managing visitors is to balance the need to mitigate risks to residents, staff, and visitors with the mental, physical, and spiritual needs of residents for their quality of life. Information may change to reflect updated provincial guidelines, and in consideration of the regional/local pandemic situation.

Retirement home will follow the same rules when visiting is happening on the LTC home/space.

All visitors coming into the Home will be tracked via the online screening tool which is available to staff if needed. Screening includes temperature checks, and attestation to not experiencing any symptoms.

In determining whether visiting a long-term care/retirement home is appropriate, we ask consideration of personal health and susceptibility to the virus.

Non-Compliance

Non-compliance could result in a discontinuation of visits for the non-compliant visitor. A visit will be ended prior to the established time if a visitor is not complying. Visitors will be provided with information/education on the Home's policies and procedures for their type of visit. If a visitor is found to not be complying re-education/instruction will be provided. The visitor must review the information. In the event a visit is ended the details will be documented.

If the circumstances cannot be resolved by education and explanation and the health and safety of residents and staff are impacted a visitor may be temporarily prohibited from visiting.

Essential Visitors

Essential Visitor are those persons performing essential support services, person visiting a very ill or palliative resident, inspector (not subject to visitor policy); there are two categories: caregivers and support workers.

Caregiver

A Caregiver is an essential visitor designated by the resident/SDM and is providing direct care to the resident e.g. feeding, mobility, personal hygiene, cognitive stimulation, communication, meaningful connection, relational continuity, assistance in decision-making.

Requirements

1. Be identified as one of two caregivers for a resident
2. Must be at least 18 years of age
3. Attest to a negative COVID test every 14 days and have no symptoms since the last test (as an added precaution we are asking you to show proof of your last COVID test; this can be in printed copy or on your mobile device).

4. Pass screening on entry and exit, including attesting to not visiting a home in outbreak or a resident who is self-isolating or symptomatic for the past 14 days
5. Follow the home's process for raising questions and concerns
6. Follow the home's infection control protocols
7. Follow public health guidelines for COVID both inside and outside of the Home
8. Only provide care and assistance to the identified family member
9. Receive training prior to visiting the first time after September 9th, on how to safely provide direct care including putting on and taking off PPE and hand hygiene; retraining will be as required, pending on the type of care, change to the resident etc.
10. Prior to visiting any resident for the first time after Sept. 9th, and monthly thereafter, the caregiver should verbally attest to home that they have read/reread the home's visitor policy and/or watched the videos
11. Maximum of 2 Caregivers per resident is allowed
12. Frequency and length of visits are not limited
13. If the Home is in outbreak or the resident is self-isolating only one visitor may visit at a time
14. A Caregiver may not visit any other resident or home for 14 days after visiting a Home that is in outbreak or a resident that is symptomatic
15. Will always wear a surgical/procedural mask; meticulous hand hygiene must be maintained throughout the visit as well as adherence to all IPAC requirements
16. may also be asked to wear a gown, gloves, and/or eye coverage; must diligently follow the implemented protocol for visits to maintain a safe environment for residents, staff, and visitors
17. Six-foot distancing is not required for a Caregiver and their resident however, the caregiver must maintain 6-foot physical distancing from all other residents, staff, and other visitors.
18. In the case of a shared room, the Caregiver must remain on their resident's side of the room only
19. No pets are permitted in the Home
20. Items such as beverages, food, flowers, or gift may be brought by the caregiver and taken directly to the resident, unless there is a specific concern identified by the screener

Training

In long term care:

- The Visitor Policy
- How to put on and Take off Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- How to properly apply, remove and wear a Mask
- Hand Hygiene
- Social Distancing from all other Residents, Staff and Visitors

Any Caregiver providing direct care will receive specific training on safely providing the type of care on their initial visit.

In retirement:

Read/Re-read

- The Visitor Policy
- Recommended Steps: Putting on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Public Health

Watch/Re-watch

- Putting on Full Personal Protective Equipment, Public Health
- Taking off Full Personal Protective Equipment, Public Health
- How to Hand Wash, Public Health

Information is available the website and available in hard copy of if requested.

Support Worker

Support Worker: An essential visitor visiting to perform essential support services to a resident at the home. Example-physician, nurse practitioner, maintenance, person delivering food (as per Visiting document of September 2nd). This extends in retirement homes to contract workers hired by the home or LHIN care services.

A Support Worker will be allowed to come to the long-term care or retirement homes to provide a service if it is considered essential. It is recognized that due to the length of the pandemic, services that were initially considered non-essential may now be considered essential e.g. footcare.

Requirements:

1. Must pass Active Screening, and attest to not experiencing symptoms by answering all the required questions on the questionnaire
2. Must verbally attest to having tested negative for COVID-19 with in the past two weeks and not subsequently tested positive
3. Where a support worker requires immediate access to the home in an emergency, the home does not need to ask for a verbal attestation for a negative COVID-19 test result
4. Communicate with a Nursing Leadership or Registered Staff person prior to commencing the service to ensure they are not seeing someone in isolation etc.
5. Must wear the PPE required by the Home for the service being provided. PPE to be supplied by the Home is not brought by the Service Provider
6. Must be knowledgeable in donning, doffing and good infection prevention and control methods. If required, the staff member will provide re-direction and education to the service provider
7. Have appropriate approval to provides services
8. Must visit only the residents who they are providing the service to
9. Must be screened on exit. Report any new symptoms or fever to the ICP
10. Provide a list of the residents who received their service on each visit for the purpose of contact tracing. In retirement homes, agency will provide the home with a list for residents receiving LHIN care services.

Note: If the Home is considered in Suspect Outbreak, Full Outbreak or if the resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, all visits will temporarily suspend until it is declared over or the resident is out of isolation.

Personal Care Service Providers (Retirement Homes)

A personal care service provider is a person who is not an essential visitor and visits to provide personal service to residents (for example, hair dressing, nail care).

Requirements

1. Must pass Active Screening, and attest to not experiencing symptoms by answering all the required questions on the questionnaire.
2. Must verbally attest to having tested negative for COVID-19 with in the past two weeks and not subsequently tested positive.
3. Communicate with a Nursing Leadership or Registered Staff person prior to commencing the service to ensure they are not seeing someone in isolation etc.
4. Must wear the PPE required by the Home for the service being provided. PPE to be supplied by the Home is not brought by the Service Provider.
5. Must be knowledgeable in donning, doffing and good infection prevention and control methods. If required, the staff member will provide re-direction and education to the service provider.
6. Must visit only the residents who they are providing the service to.
7. Must be screened on exit. Report any new symptoms or fever to the ICP.

8. Provide a list of the residents who received their service on each visit. This is for the purpose of contact tracing.

Procedure

1. The person will have approval to provide services as a Service Provider.
2. Service Providers will be screened upon entry and don appropriate PPE at screening station.
3. PPE must always be worn while in the home.
4. If requested the appropriate manager will be notified that the Service Provider is in the Home.
5. The Service Provider will be screened including temperature check at the end of the service.

Note the following:

If the Home is considered in Suspect Outbreak, Full Outbreak or if the resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, we will temporarily suspend all visits until it is declared over or the resident is out of isolation.

During an outbreak, the local Public Health unit may advise further restrictions on visitors in part or all of the home, dependent on the specific situation.

End of Life Visitor

The Visitor is allowed visiting privileges to someone who is very ill or palliative. The Visitor will receive individual support as required depending on the situation. An information sheet will be made available to all End of Life Visitors. According to the LTCH Act every resident who is dying or who is very ill has the right to have family and friends present 24 hours per day. According to Directive #3, the home has discretion to determine how many visitors may visit a palliative or very ill resident. Consider the physical characteristics of the home/area, staff availability and status of PPE in the home.

Procedure

1. Preapproval is provided by the Executive Director or DRC or designate for allowing a visitor to come into the Home.
2. A negative COVID test is not a requirement for an End of Life Visitor
3. When possible, pre-screening should be completed by the Nurse before allowing the visit. (Telephone screening using active screening questions).
4. The Nurse should ask if they have visited another health care facility within the last 14 days. If the answer is yes or they do not pass screening they cannot enter the Home.
5. If the visitor passes the telephone screening they will be allowed to visit. A sign in & out sheet may be used to keep the screener informed if there is currently a visitor with the resident.
6. The results of the telephone screening will be documented in the resident's progress notes.
7. If the Home is in outbreak or the resident is self-isolating only one visitor may visit at a time.
8. Frequency and length of visits are not limited.
9. A Caregiver may not visit any other resident or home for 14 days after visiting a Home that is in outbreak or a resident that is symptomatic.
10. The nurse will inform the screener of the approved visitor.
11. The visitor will be actively screened upon entry and provided with PPE. All visitors must wear a gown, gloves, face shield or goggles.
12. The nurse will ensure PPE is worn appropriately and provide any required education. The visitor will be escorted to the room. An additional mask may need to be provided for the visitor in the event the mask becomes soiled or wet.
13. Visitors will be supplied with an instruction sheet which will provide details regarding precautions to be followed during the visit.
14. The visitor will be screened again before leaving the Home.

General Visitors

General Visitor: A person who is not an essential visitor and is visiting for non-essential services or for social reasons. In retirement homes this extends to a prospective resident taking a tour of the home.

To increase resident quality of life and decrease isolation by ensuring safety of residents and staff by facilitating visits between residents and their family while adhering to the current directives such as from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Long-Term Care, Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility (MSSA), and Public Health Ontario Guidelines, RHRA and all other applicable guidelines. Visits for the retirement home will follow the same guidelines as the long-term care home.

The process for visits will be communicated with families and loved ones through the following: One-Call Now system, emails, and website.

Information with details regarding physical distancing, respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, infection and prevention control practices, and proper use of PPE; and the discontinuation of visits if visitors do not adhere to the guidelines (i.e. no more visits, resident self-isolated) is available on the website and will be provided at the time of screening.

Visitors may have a maximum of 2 visitors at a time. There may be a need to restrict to 1 visitor at a time depending on circumstances in the Home.

Prior to visiting after September 9th, and monthly thereafter general visitors should verbally attest to the home that they have read/e-read or watched/re-watched the home's visitor policy.

In retirement, the Caregiver will be provided access to information including:

Read/Re-read

- The Visitor Policy
- Recommended Steps: Putting on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Public Health

Watch/Re-watch

- Putting on Full Personal Protective Equipment, Public Health
- Taking off Full Personal Protective Equipment, Public Health
- How to Hand Wash, Public Health

Information is available the website and available in hard copy of if requested.

Outdoor Visitors

During outdoor visits, all appropriate precautions must be taken to prevent exposure to COVID-19.

Requirements – Long Term Care and Retirement Homes

1. Be feeling well on the date/time of visit (must pass the active screening tool)
2. Physical distancing of a minimum of 6 feet from resident and other visitors/staff. (See exception to social distancing above).
3. Wear a mask or face covering (bring their own)

4. No Pets allowed.
5. Facilities will not be available for visitors (e.g. washrooms)

Note: All visiting outdoors on the property must follow the Outdoor Visiting policies and procedures.

Requirements – Long Term Care Only

1. Visiting areas will be clearly marked and visit must take place in the pre-arranged location only
2. No deliveries or trading – everything must come through the screener for disinfecting

Procedure – Long Term Care and Retirement Homes

1. Maximum of two persons per visit per resident. If one of the visitors is a child (<14), they must be supervised by second visitor and must abide by all the same rules.
2. The family visitor(s) will arrive to Home at the assigned time of the visit.
 - Please come to the front door to be screened and register that you have arrived for the visit.
 - Information regarding physical distancing, respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, infection and prevention control practices, and proper use of PPE; and consequences of not following guidelines (information package will be provided for visitors to review with each visit) i.e. – no more visits, resident self-isolated). Information is available online (website) and printed copies at the Home.
 - PPE (mask brought by Visitor) will be put on prior to the start of the visit
3. Attestation and documentation regarding the understanding of the information package and the date/time of visit is recorded by the active screening tool.
4. Enhanced cleaning for Outdoor Visiting Area

Procedure – Long Term Care Only

1. Family will arrange a date and time slot for the visit utilizing the online tool.
2. Visiting options
 - Outdoor visiting options: please see online schedule for options
 - Visits will be a maximum of 30 minutes
3. For the safety of all, a staff member will be outside to ensure required restrictions are maintained during the visit.
4. The family visitor(s) will arrive to Home at the assigned time of the visit. Visitors are asked to remain in their car until 5 minutes before the designated visiting time.
 - Please come to the front door to be screened and register that you have arrived for the visit. Once you pass the screening, your family member will be assisted to the designated area.
 - PPE (mask brought by Visitor) will be put on prior to the start of the visit
 - A staff member will direct the visitor to the applicable marked outdoor visiting area
5. A staff member will communicate/assist the resident to the applicable visiting area.
6. The staff member will communicate/assist the resident back into the Home approximately 30 minutes later.
7. Enhanced cleaning for Outdoor Visiting Area
 - Staff members will be provided with disinfectant wipes to clean surfaces and objects between each visit. Gloves to be worn.
 - Cleaning will be done by staff supervising the outdoor visits.
 - Touched surfaces will be cleaned with the disinfectant wipes upon conclusion of the visit.

To allow all residents to have opportunities to visit in-person with family members, residents will be limited to one outdoor visit per week.

In addition to the above requirements for visitors, the Home reserves the right to cancel outdoor visits at any time should the risks be considered too high including visitors or residents not complying with the rules in place as well as:

- If the Home is considered in *Suspect Outbreak* or *Full Outbreak*, we will temporarily suspend all outdoor visits until it is declared over
- Visits are weather dependent. In the case of adverse weather conditions (heavy rain/heat/cold advisories), outdoor visits will be cancelled.
- Given the challenge for residents with cognitive decline to adhere to the above process; this outdoor visit will be considered on an individualized basis

Indoor Visits

During indoor visits, all appropriate precautions must be taken to prevent exposure to COVID-19.

Requirements – Long Term Care and Retirement Homes

1. Be feeling well on the date/time of visit (must pass the active screening tool)
2. Attest to having a negative COVID-19 test within the past 14 days. As an added precaution we are asking you to show proof of your last COVID test. This can be in printed copy or on your phone.
3. Physical distancing of a minimum of 6 feet (must not physically touch / hug, etc.) from resident and other visitors/staff (see exceptions above)
4. Wear a surgical mask for the entire visit (provided by the Home)
5. There is a designated visiting area. The visit must take place in the pre-arranged location only.
6. A designated washroom has been made available for visitor usage. Use only this washroom.
7. No Pets allowed.

Requirements – Long Term Care Only

1. No deliveries or trading – everything must come through the screener for disinfecting

Procedure

1. Family will arrange a date and time slot for the visit utilizing the online tool.
2. Visiting options
 - Indoor visiting options: please see online schedule for options
 - Visits will be a maximum of 30 minutes for long term care and 45 minutes for retirement homes
 - Maximum of two persons per visit per resident (both to attest to a negative COVID-19 test). If one of the visitors is a child (<14), they must always be supervised and must abide by the same rules.
3. For the safety of all, a staff member will supervise the area, to ensure required restrictions are maintained during the visit.
4. The family visitor(s) will arrive to Home at the assigned time of the visit.
 - Please come to the front door to be screened and register that you have arrived for the visit. Once you pass the screening, your family member will be assisted to the designated area. Visitors are asked to remain in their car until 5 minutes prior to their designated visit time.
 - Information regarding physical distancing, respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, infection and prevention control practices, and proper use of PPE; and consequences of not following guidelines (information package will be provided for visitors to review with each visit) i.e. – no more visits, resident self-isolated). Information is available online (website) and printed copies at the Home.

- The surgical mask provided by the Home will be put on at the screening table, prior to the start of the visit
 - A staff member will direct the visitor to the applicable marked visiting area
5. A staff member will communicate/assist the resident to the applicable visiting area.
 6. The staff member will communicate/assist the resident back to their room approximately 30 minutes later.
 7. Attesting and documenting the understanding of the information package and the date/time of visit; recorded by the active screening tool.
 8. Enhanced cleaning for Indoor Visiting Area
 - Staff members will be provided with disinfectant wipes to clean surfaces and objects between each visit. Gloves to be worn.
 - Cleaning will be done by staff supervising the indoor visits.
 - Touched surfaces will be cleaned with the disinfectant wipes upon conclusion of the visit.

Note the following:

If the Home is considered in Suspect Outbreak, Full Outbreak or if the resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, we will temporarily suspend all visits until it is declared over or the resident is out of isolation.

During an outbreak, the local Public Health unit may advise further restrictions on visitors in part or all of the home, dependent on the specific situation.

Given the challenge for residents with cognitive decline to adhere to the above process; this visit will be considered on an individualized basis

To allow all residents to have opportunities to visit in-person with family members, residents will be limited to one visit per week.

Virtual Visits

Procedure:

- To arrange a virtual visit, please book online or contact reception
- The home will provide the technology to the resident and ensure you are connected at a pre-arranged time