



POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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HOME:	Caressant Care Nursing & Retirement Homes Ltd.	Policy ID:	LTC-IPAC-S10-90.1
SUBJECT:	RH Visiting Policy		
ISSUING AUTHORITY:			
EFFECTIVE DATE:	SUPERCEDES:	REVIEWED DATE:	
October 14, 2022	October 14, 2022	October 14, 2022	

PURPOSE:

To provide guidance Retirement Homes (RH) on how to implement visiting in the homes.

The home(s) recognize the role that families, friends, and visitors play in providing caregiving and emotional support that adds to the quality of life of our residents. Visitors are welcome into the homes and the visitor policy respects the Resident's Bill of Rights. Rules for RH visits continue to be in place to protect the health and safety of the residents, staff, and visitors, while receiving the care they need and maintain their emotional well-being.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Retirement homes are responsible for ensuring that resident receive visitors safely by implementing visiting practices that help to protect against the risk of COVID-19. It remains critical that retirement homes continue to implement and enforce preventative measures to protect the health and safety of residents and staff
- Homes must ensure that all staff students, volunteers, and residents abide by health and safety practice in MOHs COVID-19 Guidance: LTCH/RH/CLS for PHU.
- Homes must adhere to any directions from their local PHU.
- Homes must facilitate visits for residents and must not unreasonably deny visitors based on frequency of visits and their vaccination status.

SAFETY:

Retirement homes must ensure the following are put in place to facilitate safe visits:

- **Adequate staffing** – the home must have sufficient staff to implement the policies related to visitor and to ensure safe visiting as determined by the homes leadership
- **Access to adequate PPE**- the has adequate supplies of PPE required to support visits



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- **IPAC Standards-** the home has appropriate cleaning and disinfectant supplies and adheres to IOAC standards, including enhanced cleaning.
- **Physical Distancing-** the home can facilitate visits in a manner aligned with physical distancing recommendations (2 metres).

Homes that may need to restrict visits based on these factors are expected to communicate their decision to residents and provide the reason for the decisions. Prior to making this decision -home will consult with their RDO.

3 TYPES OF VISITORS

1. Essential Visitors

- Persons performing essential support services (e.g., food delivery, inspectors, maintenance, or health services (e.g., phlebotomy) or a person visiting a very ill or palliative resident
- External Care Providers (ECP) are employees, staff or contractors of Home and Community Care Support Services (HCCSS) (formerly Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) and provide services to residents

There are 2 categories of Essential Visitors: Support Workers and Essential Care Givers.

- a) Support Workers: A support worker is brought into the home to perform essential services for the home or for a resident in the home including:
- Regulated health care professionals under the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 (e.g., physicians, nurses)
 - Unregulated health care workers (e.g., PSWs, personal support aides, Guest attendant), including external care providers and HCCSS providers
 - Authorized third parties who accommodate the needs of a resident with a disability
 - Health and safety worker, including IPAC specialist
 - Maintenance Workers
 - Private housekeepers
 - Inspectors and



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- Food Delivery

b) Essential Caregivers: Essential caregivers provide care to a resident, including supporting feeding, mobility, personal hygiene, cognitive stimulation, communication, meaningful connection, relational community, and assistance in decision making.

- Essential caregivers can be a family member, a privately hired caregiver, paid companions, and translators even if the person would be considered a Support Worker
- Are designated by the resident or if unable to do so, by the resident's substitute decision maker (SDM)
- Designation must be made in writing to the home – see *Designation of Essential Caregivers Form*.

2. **General Visitors** are individuals who are not Essential Visit and visit:

- For social reasons (e.g., family members and friends of residents)
- To provide non-essential services (may or may not be hired by the home or the resident and/or their SDM) and/or
- As a prospective resident taking a tour of the home

3. **Personal Care Service Providers** is a person who is not an Essential Visitor and visits to provide non-essential personal services to residents. Includes those outlined under the Health Protection and Promotion Act such as hair salons and barbershops, manicure and pedicure salons, and aesthetician services that are not being provided for medical or essential reasons.

NOT CONSIDERED VISITORS:

- RH Staff
- Volunteers
- Student placements
- Infants under the age of one



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PROCEDURE:

1. Prior to visiting a resident for the first time and if there are any updates or changes, Homes must ask **General Visitors, Personal Care Providers, Support Workers, and Essential Caregivers** (regardless of vaccination) status to:

Read:

- This policy
- Public Health Ontario's document entitled Recommended Steps: Putting on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Watch:

- video: [putting on full personal protective equipment](#)
- video: [taking off full personal protective equipment](#)
- videos: [how to hand wash](#)

2. Prior to visiting any resident in a home in outbreak for the first time, the home should provide training to **Essential caregiver and Support Workers** who are not trained as part of their service provision or through their employment.

Training must address:

- How to safely provide direct care
- Putting on (donning) PPE
- Removing (doffing) PPE and
- Hand Hygiene

Note -if the home cannot provide the training, the home must direct Essential caregivers and support workers to appropriate resources from Public Health Ontario to acquire this training.

3. All visitors must wear PPE as required in MOH COVID-19 Guidance: LTCH/RH/CLS for PHU.
 - **Support Workers**- are responsible for bringing in their own PPE
 - **Essential Caregivers**- homes are to provide access to PPE if essential



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caregivers are unable to acquire PPE independently including medical (surgical/procedure) masks, eye protection (face shields, or goggles) and any additional PPE when providing care to resident who are isolating on Droplet and Contact Precautions

- **General Visitors & Personal Care Service Providers-** must be provided with a medical mask for indoor visits if they have not brought their own.
 - **Note – see *Masking Policy***
4. Homes must intervene and reinforce appropriate use of PPE if improper practices are alleged or observed. Essential visitors and general visitors must follow staff reminder and coaching on proper use of PPE.
 5. All visitors that enter the home regardless of vaccination status, must undergo active screening. Any visitor that fails the screening, will be directed by the screening staff and/or managers on procedures required to enter the home.
 - Exemptions to active screening apply to first responders and visitors for imminently palliative residents who must remain masked and physical distance from other residents and staff
 6. All visitors and caregivers that enter the home must undergo surveillance testing each day they enter the home. If they have already completed surveillance testing at another facility, they must provide proof of their negative test. Children under the age of one are exempt for surveillance testing.
 7. Although physical distancing is not required with the visitor and the resident they are visiting, visitors are encouraged to maintain physical distancing with other residents that are in the home.
 8. Physical distancing is still required by visitors involved in social gatherings, organized events, communal dining, recreational activities, and tours of the home.
 9. **Residents who are not isolating and do not live in an outbreak area of the home** may receive any type and number of visitors.



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10. **Residents who are isolating under Droplet and Contact Precautions** may only receive Essential Visitors.
11. There are no limits to the number of visitors permitted for outdoor visits. Physical distancing is encouraged amongst groups.
12. General visitors are not permitted:
 - When a resident is isolating and on Droplet or Contact Precautions or
 - When the local public health unit advised to stop general visiting
13. In the case where a home's local public health unit directs the home in respect to the number of visitors allowed, the home must follow this direction.
14. Where it is not possible for in person visits, the home will continue to provide virtual and window visiting options where possible
15. Any non-adherence to this policy will be the basis for discontinuation of visits or caregiving. The home will:
 - Recognize that visits and caregiving are critical in supporting a resident's care needs and emotional well-being
 - Consider the impact of discontinuing visits on the resident and
 - Make every reasonable effort to ensure that any disruption to visiting/caregiving is reflective and proportionate to the severity of the non-adherence
 - Protect resident, staff, and visitors in the home from the risk of COVID 19 and other infections.
16. The home may temporarily prohibit a visitor in response to repeated and serious non-adherence with the home's visiting policy (upon 3rd incident).
 - The homes RHM/ ED will make the final determination to discontinue visiting and will advise the visitor of this finding in writing. This decision



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should only be made after all other reasonable efforts to maintain safety during visits has been exhausted.

- The home will stipulate a reasonable length of time in which the visitor is not permitted to visit the home.
- Prior to reinstating a visitor, the home will clearly identify what requirements the visitors must meet before visits may be resumed (e.g., reviewing the home visiting policy, reviewing Public Health Ontario resources etc.)
- Records will be kept of all incidents and when all incidents resulted in the discontinuation of visiting.
- Where the home has prohibited an essential caregiver from coming into the home, the resident/SDM may need to designate an alternative individual as a caregiver to assist with the needs of the resident.

17. If a visitor demonstrates repeated incidents (3rd incident) of non-adherence where the home has provided the visitor with education explaining the necessary requirements and has ensured that the visitors are provided with sufficient time and resources to adhere to the requirements and the home RHM and/or ED have made themselves available to discuss any parts of this policy with visitors as required (dates and times of session should be recorded), the RHM or designate will ask the visitor to speak in a private area. The visitor will be informed that their visit is ending and why. The visitor will be asked to leave the home immediately and the home will document the ending of the visit due to non-adherence.

18. The home reserves the right to cancel any visits if they deem the risk to be too high. (e.g., outdoor visits-may be cancelled due to inclement weather) or the home is in an outbreak (except for essential caregivers).

19. While the home is not required to supervise visits, they have the discretion to do so to manage the health and safety of residents, staff, and visitors (e.g., monitoring the flow of visitors to ensure sufficient physical distancing is maintained, supporting residents during their visits, etc.). If the homes RHM determines that supervision is required, supervision will be conducted in a manner that:

- Respects the residents right to communicate in confidence



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- Receive visitors of their choice and
- Consult in private with any person without interference.

20. Pets are allowed to visit. Visitors must keep the pet on a leash and only allow the resident they are visiting to be in contact with the pet. Visitors must adhere to all pet visiting policies.

21. Tours of the home: tour groups should be limited to the prospective resident/couple and one other individual. Tours should be conducted at a time and a route that avoids contact with residents. Tours are not conducted during an outbreak. Visitors on a tour are exempt from the vaccination requirement.

22. Gifts and Food: all items (including food) that visitors wish to give residents must be clearly labeled with the resident's name on the container. In cases where visitors bring in items for a group, the home strongly recommends that the food is individually wrapped. The visitors must seek the support of the home. Flowers are allowed.

23. The visitor policy will be well communicated and is provided to resident and families as required, will be posted in the home and on the homes website and included in the resident information package upon admission.

See Also:

Designation of Essential Caregiver(s) Form
Resident's Bill of Rights