



Caressant Care Nursing and Retirement Homes Limited

November 24, 2020

Updates to Visiting during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Dear Residents, Family Members, Caregivers and Friends:

As the pandemic situation evolves in Ontario, direction regarding visits to our Homes will be adjusted as necessary, keeping the safety and emotional wellbeing of residents, staff and families at the forefront.

Framework and Health Measures

The provincial government recently released the *COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open* to direct local public health units on regional health measures and sector-specific public health and workplace safety measures to respond to local activity, transmission and surge capacity.

The *COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open* categorizes public health regions into five (5) levels determined by local COVID-19 activity: Green-Prevent, Yellow-Protect, Orange-Restrict, Red-Control, and Grey-Lockdown, being a measure of last and urgent resort. The full plan and details can be found at Ontario.ca ([here](#)).

Visiting and Caregiving Program

On November 14, 2020, the Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC) updated its visitor policy to address regions experiencing increased COVID-19 activity and transmission. Changes to the visitor policy went into effect on November 16, 2020.

If the local public health unit is in the Green-Prevent or Yellow-Protect level, the care community is not in outbreak, and a resident is not self-isolating or symptomatic, a maximum of two (2) essential caregivers may visit the resident at a time. At the discretion of the Home, the number of caregivers may be further restricted, provided that the Home permits at minimum one (1) caregiver per resident at a time.

If the local Public Health Unit is in the Orange-Restrict, Red-Control or Grey-Lockdown level, or the care community is in outbreak, a maximum of one (1) essential caregiver may visit the resident at a time.

We continue to temporarily cease general visiting, short term and temporary absences at this time. Absences for medical or compassionate reasons are permitted.

Testing

On November 22, 2020, the Minister of Long-Term Care issued a Minister's Directive: COVID-19: Long-Term Care Home Surveillance Testing and Access to Homes, effective November 23, 2020.

The Minister's Directive outlines mandatory testing and access requirements for general visitors, caregivers, support workers, staff, students and volunteers entering Homes. Requirements are specific to levels identified in the framework.

Effective November 30, 2020 - When a Home is in the **Green** or **Yellow** Risk Level, Caregivers, support workers and general visitors **must** provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test result in the past **two weeks** and verbally attest to not subsequently testing positive. When the Home is in the **Orange, Red** or **Grey** Risk Level, Caregivers and support workers **must** provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test result in the **past week** and verbally attest to not subsequently testing positive. General visitors are not permitted in the Home when a Home is Orange Red or Grey Risk Levels.

Visitors can get tested at local Assessment Centres and participating pharmacies. During each visit, you will be asked to demonstrate that you have received a negative COVID-19 test result by showing the Home the results of the test (i.e. printout or on a mobile device showing your name, test date and result).

If you previously had laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 and have been cleared by the local public health unit, you will not be required to be re-tested under this Directive unless directed by the local public health unit. On entry to the Home, you will be required to demonstrate clearance from the local public health unit (i.e. letter from the public health unit showing your name and date of clearance).

If your loved one is very ill or palliative, you will not be required to demonstrate that you have received a negative COVID-19 test result or verbally attest to not subsequently having tested positive.

Any individual who refuses or fails to demonstrate that they have received a negative COVID-19 test result or verbally attest to not subsequently having tested positive, will not be permitted entry to the Home as per the Minister's Directive.

This letter is an addendum to our Visitor Information Package. Please make reference to this package for additional information about the Home's visiting and caregiving programs.

For any questions regarding Directive #3, the Minister's Directive, the MLTC COVID-19 Visiting Policy, the LTCH's policy or to discuss any circumstances surrounding the individualized needs of your loved one, please contact the Director of Care or Executive Director.

The safety of our residents, staff and families is our utmost priority. Our sincerest appreciation and gratitude for your ongoing support and partnership as we unite together in the ongoing fight against COVID-19.