

CCIR# 91.0

CONTINUING CARE INFORMATION RELEASE

TO: Long Term Care Providers

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FROM: Paula Langille, Director, Long Term Care, DHW

DATE: November 20, 2020

RE: Long Term Care Guideline Changes

The Department of Health and Wellness acknowledges the importance in easing some restrictions at Long-Term Care Facilities and the need to support residents' quality of life, mental health, and overall well-being. Since June 2020, in collaboration with the Medical Officers of Health, Continuing Care has been diligently working on safely reopening long-term care in a way that keeps residents safe and reduces their risk of COVID-19 exposure.

The approach to re-opening has been one of caution – incremental changes based not only on the risk of COVID-19 circulation in the community, but also on the aspects of our LTC facilities, such as infrastructure, staffing, and other supports, that can become stressed during an outbreak. This approach will also be used to incrementally re-apply restrictions in the event of an outbreak in the community, as determined in consultation with Public Health. This may occur in a specific geographical area or may be province wide.

Based on the latest available scientific evidence and expert opinion about COVID-19, the following changes will be implemented **effective November 23, 2020**.

- LTC facilities can **begin** to include volunteers in their programming province wide.
- Off site visits with family will be **suspended** province wide.
- On site gatherings in **Central Zone** will be **reduced** to up to 5 people (including residents and staff) will be permitted.

All other previous changes **will** continue:

- Indoor and outdoor visits will continue in LTC facilities.
- LTC facilities permitted to use buses to take up to 10 people for “sightseeing” drives.
- Designated caregivers will be able to continue to visit their loved ones and may also be Designated Drivers for the purpose of taking a resident out of the facility for a “sightseeing drive”, but no stops allowed.
- Any off-site medical appointments will continue, as will sightseeing trips on buses.
- Zones outside of Central will continue to have on site gatherings for up to 10 people (including residents and staff)

Please note that additional guidelines and directives will be updated and released next week.