

# Things to Consider When Visiting a Loved One in Long Term Care

Information for long term care visitors and residents

**Residents of long-term care homes can be at higher risk of severe illness from infection. It is important that visitors take steps to protect residents and keep them safe.**

## **Things to consider before your visit:**

*(If you are taking your loved one for an outing, the same considerations apply)*

- 1)** Cancel your visit and stay home if you or those you spend time with feel sick (even with mild symptoms that they believe are due to a respiratory infection), or if you've tested positive for COVID-19

If you develop any of the following symptoms, cancel your visit, stay home, and wait until you are feeling better with no remaining symptoms before you visit again:

### **New, worsening, or unexplained:**

- Cough
- Fever or feverish feeling (temperature of 37.8°C or greater, chills, sweats)
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Sore throat, hoarse voice, or difficulty swallowing
- Runny nose/nasal congestion/excessive sneezing
- Headache or muscle aches
- Extreme fatigue/tiredness
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Loss or change in sense of smell or taste

- 2) Get vaccinated.** Being vaccinated against viruses and bacteria (such as influenza and COVID-19) reduces the risk of getting infection and passing it onto others. It also reduces your risk of becoming very sick.
- 3) Wear a mask.** Wearing a well-fitting mask can help reduce the risk of spreading many respiratory infections.

- 4) **Maintain healthy habits.** Clean your hands often with soap and water or hand sanitizer. Cough and sneeze into your elbow. Avoid sharing food, drinks, and personal items.
- 5) **Gather safely.** Keep your social contacts to a small, consistent group. Make informed choices about who you interact with and how.
- 6) **Keep a distance and limit interactions with other individuals.** Keep 2 metres distance and limit your interaction with others, including other residents. Consider eating meals away from others and avoiding large group activities. In general, the more people you spend time with or the closer the interaction, the higher the risk.

*If you develop any of the above symptoms shortly after visiting a resident, or if a resident comes in contact with someone with one of these symptoms during their outing, contact the long-term care home and make the staff aware, in efforts to protect the health of others.*