

May 21, 2021

A message for our families

Aligned with the Provincial government's announcement that they will soon lift certain outdoor pandemic restrictions, the Ministry of Long-Term Care has issued a change to visiting policies for LTC Homes. This includes allowing general visitors to come to their loved one's Home for an outdoor visit.

This is welcome news as we miss all our residents' families and friends, and we're excited to be able to ramp up outdoor visits again. To prepare for safe and enjoyable outdoor visits for all, and ensure we have the necessary resources in place, our teams are working hard on our plans over the next few days. Our booking system will open on Tuesday, May 25, so families can start scheduling outdoor visits with their loved one as early as Wednesday, May 26.

We are focused on ensuring every family who wants to visit has an opportunity to do so, which is why outdoor visits will be a maximum of 30 minutes at this time. To support a smooth process that is fair to all, families will need to book visits in advance either online or by calling the Director of Programs at their loved one's Home.

As we get ready to soon begin accepting appointments for outdoor visits guided by Ministry directives and following Public Health measures to keep everyone safe, here are some things to know:

- A maximum of two outdoor general visitors are permitted per resident at a time, in addition to their essential caregiver (children under the age of two don't count towards this number).
- All visitors are actively screened when they arrive, which includes checking for symptoms and asking about travel and contact history. As a reminder, visitors must watch the following training videos on their first visit and review every 30 days following that: [How to Hand Wash](#), [How to Hand Rub](#), [Putting on Full PPE](#), [Taking off Full PPE](#)
- We recently introduced a new digital, touchless active screening process that visitors complete on their smartphone or with assistance from our screener on our tablet. This new solution is easier and faster, while continuing to ensure residents, staff and families remain protected.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is provided and required, along with hand hygiene.
- As families must wear masks at all times during outdoor visits, we ask that they please don't bring any food or drink to share with their loved one.
- Physical distancing of six feet must be maintained between general visitors and residents at all times.
- General visitors are not required to complete a rapid antigen test when they arrive for their outdoor visit.
- If a Home is in outbreak, general visitors can come for an outdoor visit if their loved one isn't symptomatic or isolating under Droplet and Contact precautions. This means that if a section of the Home is in outbreak, any residents that aren't in this cohort and are unaffected may still have outdoor visits.

As a reminder, [designated family caregivers](#) are always welcome in our Homes. In an average week, our teams support over 1,600 caregiver visits, through education, PPE and opportunities for COVID testing and vaccination. We encourage families who feel this program could work for them and their loved one to connect with our team to learn more.

As always, thank you to our families for your ongoing support. We hope to see you soon, and please don't hesitate to connect with the Executive Director of your specific peopleCare Home with any questions.