

DIVISION:	Administration		
POLICY SECTION:	Long Term Care and Seniors Services	EFFECTIVE DATE:	November 13, 2020
SUBJECT:	Visitor Policy During COVID-19 Pandemic		
POLICY NUMBER:	ADM G-45	SUPERCEDES:	October 5, 2020

1. PURPOSE

The gradual and staged approach in the resumption of visitors in long-term care and retirement home must consider, balance and meet the health and safety needs of residents, staff, family and friends.

Allowing equitable access for visitors, is intended to support the physical, mental, and spiritual needs of residents through reducing any potential negative outcome that could result from the interruption in receipt of primary care services or from social isolation.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Resident visitors into the Home will adhere to the current Directives from the Ministry of Long Term Care (MLTC) and Retirement Home Regulatory Authority (RHRA) while balancing the current requirements for safety and infection control required during the COVID-19 Pandemic

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all residents in Long Term Care Homes and Retirement Home, when not in outbreak.

4. DEFINITIONS

Essential Visitor- Visitors including a person performing essential support services (i.e.: Food delivery, MLTC or RHRA Inspector, maintenance or health care services (phlebotomy)) or a person visiting a very ill or palliative resident;

Support Worker- Visiting to perform essential support services for the Home or for a resident of the Home. Examples include physicians, nurse practitioners, dental services, maintenance workers or a person delivering food, provided they are not staff of the LTC or Retirement Home as defined in the LTCHA and RHRA;

Caregiver- Type of essential visitor who is:

- a. Designated by the resident and/or their Substitute decision maker and;
- b. Visiting to provide direct care to the resident (Eg. Supporting feeding, cognitive stimulation, communication, meaningful connection, relational continuity and assistance in decision making). Examples include family members who provide meaningful connection, a privately hired caregiver, paid companions and translators;
- c. Must be at least 18 years of age.

General Visitor- A person who is not an essential visitor and is visiting. Visitors under 14 years must be accompanied by an adult and count as one visitor:

- a. To provide non-essential services who may or may not be hired by the home
- b. For social reasons that the resident or their substitute decision maker assesses as different from direct care

Support Person-Support persons help people with a disability perform daily tasks, ie they are unable to do certain things by themselves. A visitor may require a support person to help them visit a Long Term Care or Retirement Home and should adhere to the Home’s visitor policy and follow the same hand hygiene, screening and PPE requirements as the visitor they are accompanying. A support person for any visitor does NOT count towards the maximum number of visitors. Visitors who need a support person must inform the Home in advance so appropriate preparations can be made.

SCREENING REQUIREMENTS When Home Not in Outbreak:

Type of Visitor	Screening	Covid-19 Testing Requirements	Special considerations
Essential Visitor (other than support workers and caregivers)	Active	Inspectors do not require testing/attestations. All other essential visitors require proof of negative test results	Homes may NOT require a person visiting an ill or palliative resident to verbally attest
Support Worker	Active	Proof of negative Covid-19 results in last 14 days; not visited another Home in outbreak or resident who is self-isolating or symptomatic	In emergency situation, where the support worker requires immediate access, verbal attestations not required
Caregiver	Active	Proof of negative Covid-19 results in last 14 days; not visited another Home in outbreak or resident who is self-isolating or symptomatic	
Supervised Indoor Visitor	Active	Refer to PSS-001 – Supervised Family Visits During Pandemic	
Supervised Patio Visits	Active	Refer to PSS-001 – Supervised Family Visits During Pandemic	Refer to the Resident Absences Policy for unsupervised on grounds outings

SCREENING PROTOCOLS

1. Ensure screening area is set up to meet all screening requirements (appropriate Screening Tool, alcohol based hand rub (ABHR), personal protective equipment (PPE), portable phone for communication purposes, thermometer, appropriate cleaning and disinfection products.
2. Visitor to perform hand hygiene prior to screening beginning. Provide direction on proper method of hand hygiene as required
3. Ensure all questions that appear on the screening tool are asked as written. Take visitors temperature and record on Screening Tool
4. Anyone who does not pass screening will not be permitted to visit/enter the building. If the screener is unsure, they are to consult with DRC/ADRC/RN for further directions.
5. Provide appropriate PPE based on type of visit
6. Ensure that all PPE is donned appropriately

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT REQUIRED:

Type of Visitor	PPE Required	Person Supplying
Essential Visitor	Surgical mask, eye protection	LTC/RH
Support Worker	Surgical mask, eye protection	LTC/RH
Caregiver	Surgical mask, eye protection	LTC/RH
General Visitor: Indoor	Surgical mask	LTC/RH
General Visitor: Outdoor	Face covering	Individual

5. PROCEDURE

ESSENTIAL VISITORS:

1. MINISTRY and RHRA INSPECTORS:

- a) Inspectors from the Ministry of Long Term Care will be actively screened upon arrival as outlined above
- b) They will be provided the required PPE upon arrival. It is the expectation that the provided PPE will be worn appropriately at all times when on Home property
- c) Inspectors will be granted access to all areas of the facility necessary to complete their duties
- d) Screening will be completed upon completion of each day. If an Inspector fails screening, they will not be granted access to the facility
- e) A record of all Inspector visits will be maintained, including screening results

2. VISITORS TO ILL AND PALLIATIVE RESIDENTS

- a) Visitors will be actively screened upon arrival at the Home as outlined above. If a visitor fails screening, they will not be granted access to the facility
- b) Visitors will be provided the required PPE upon arrival. It is the expectation that the provided PPE will be worn appropriately at all times when on Home property
- c) 2 visitors will be permitted to visit with a very ill or palliative resident at a time. Length of the visits is at the discretion of the appropriate Home staff based on circumstances within the Home
- d) Visits will occur in room in which resident is residing. If the resident is in a shared room, the home will endeavor to find private accommodations for the palliative resident.
- e) Visitors with a palliative resident can use the resident's washroom or the public washroom in the Home.

- f) Visits with palliative residents are permitted during an Outbreak, based on Public Health advice
- g) A record of all visitors to ill and palliative residents will be maintained, including screening results
- h) Visitors to use additional PPE if resident on additional precautions (i.e., droplet/contact precautions) as per directive #1 and receive education on donning/doffing and hand hygiene

3. SUPPORT WORKERS

- a) Support Workers will be actively screened upon arrival at the Home as outlined above. If a visitor fails screening, they will not be granted access to the facility. Proof of negative Covid-19 results within the prior 14 days is required
- b) Support Workers will be provided the required PPE upon arrival. It is the expectation that the provided PPE will be worn appropriately at all times when on Home property
- c) Services will be completed in room in which resident is residing
- d) Continued service during an Outbreak will be granted based on Public Health direction
- e) A record of all support workers visiting the Home and the resident(s) they have visited will be maintained, including screening results
- f) Support Workers to use additional PPE if resident on additional precautions (i.e., droplet/contact precautions) as per directive #1 and receive education on donning/doffing and hand hygiene

4. DESIGNATED ESSENTIAL CAREGIVERS

- a) Designation of caregivers is entirely the responsibility of the resident/Substitute Decision Maker.
- b) Caregivers must be at least 18 years of age
- c) Each resident is entitled to designate 1 essential caregiver initially with a phased approach to adding a second essential caregiver. The visiting privileges for these caregivers will be phased in related to the ability of the Home to establish processes for these visits while maintaining the Health and Safety of all residents and staff.
- d) During outbreaks or resident is self-isolating, a maximum of 1 caregiver per resident may visit at a time;-at any other time, both may visit together. Direction from Public Health will always guide practice in these situations.
- e) Caregivers to use additional PPE if resident on additional precautions (i.e., droplet/contact precautions) as per directive #1 and receive education on donning/doffing and hand hygiene

5. PROCESS FOR DESIGNATION

- a) The Resident/Substitute Decision Maker (SDM) will contact the Home and a teleconference will be arranged between the SDM and the DRC/Supervisor, Community Programs or Administrator/Director. Once the validity of the SDM is confirmed, Management will review the policy and expectations with the SDM. The "Designation of Essential Caregiver" will be prepared in anticipation of the first visit
- b) The Designation of Essential Caregiver form must be signed by SDM and designated individual, as well as Management prior to the initial visit. The original of the form will be maintained by the Home and a copy provided to the designated individual
- c) A tracking sheet will be maintained by the Home of all individuals designated as essential caregivers

- d) A request for a change in designation of individuals must be made in writing to the Home and will be reviewed by Management. If a request for change is denied, the reason for the denial will be provided in writing.

6. PROCESS FOR VISIT

- a) Once the designated essential caregiver is established by above process, visits can begin.
- b) Essential Visitors are asked to provide advanced notice of their arrival time to the Administrative Assistant. No time limits will be imposed on the length of time in the Home.
- c) Visitors will be required to be escorted on and off the units by staff.
- d) The designated caregiver will be actively screened with each visit.
- e) A declaration will be signed with each visit that outlines expectations, includes an acknowledgment that the visitor policy has been reviewed, safety training has been completed and indicates the date and result of their most current Covid-19 test. Proof of negative result will be required. If results are delayed, caregiver will be required to confirm date, time and location of recent test.
- f) All visits will take place in the designated resident's room, including meals when caregiver is present
- g) PPE as provided by the Home must be worn at all times
- h) The designated caregiver is expected to maintain physical distancing of at least 2 m from all other residents and Home staff at all times. If caregivers require to speak with staff, they are encouraged to ring the call bell for assistance and staff will respond to the resident's room. Wandering through the unit is not permitted.
- i) Any items brought in by the essential caregiver for the resident (except food intended to be consumed during the visit) will be subject to current Resident Belongings protocols
- j) Designated caregivers can choose to be part of routine testing at the Home. Should they choose this option, the designated caregiver must contact the Management to make these arrangements.

7. GENERAL VISITS- INDOOR AND OUTDOOR

- a) PSS and Community Programs Supervisors will monitor and oversee scheduling of requested General Visits (indoor and outdoor) during the times allotted on designated days. Visits will be allotted in 60 minute increments to allow for appropriate cleaning between visits
- b) Every attempt will be made to meet requests for a Resident to receive one visit per week
- c) Only two individuals are permitted to meet with a Resident at one time
- d) Each supervised visit will be supported by 1 staff member. Supervision practices will be fully respect and promote resident's right to communicate in confidence, receive visitors of their choice and consult in private with any person without interference
- e) No pets will be permitted
- f) All visits are required to follow physical distancing protocols, respiratory etiquette protocols, hand hygiene protocols and proper PPE use
- g) Any visitor who does not follow outlined protocols will have their visiting privileges rescinded
- h) Visits not permitted for residents on droplet/contact precautions

8. PROCESS FOR RESCINDING VISITING PRIVILEGES

- a) Any non-compliance with the Home's policies regarding safe visits and expectations may result in the discontinuation of visits of the non-compliant visitor.
- b) Issues of non-compliance include, but are not limited to:
 - Must only visit with the one resident they are intended to visit
 - Must wear all required PPE at all times
 - Must maintain physical distancing from all other residents and staff
 - Must follow all Infection Prevention and Control processes as outlined by the Home
 - Must provide proof of Covid-19 results as determined by the policy
- c) Visits may be ended at the discretion of the Home's Management Team after repeated non-adherence provided the Home has explained all applicable requirements and expectations to the visitor
- d) Any decision to temporarily prohibit a visitor will be made after all other reasonable efforts to maintain safety during visits has been exhausted. The decision to prohibit visitation will be communicated to the visitor in writing and a record will be maintained at the Home including length of restriction and requirements that need to be met before resuming visits

CLEANING PROTOCOLS FOR ALL VISITS

- All visitor/ resident seating in visit spaces must be non-porous wipe able surfaces.
- Areas must be cleaned at minimum three times per day using disinfectant wipes provided by the Long Term Care Home
- Nitrile gloves must be worn when handling disinfectant wipes.
- Floor must be washed daily

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

[Designation of Essential Caregivers](#)

[Essential Caregiver Declaration form](#)

[Resident Visitors Information Package](#)

[COVID-19 Process for Families, Friends and Neighbors Brochure](#)