
COVID-19 – Our Next Steps

COVID-19 Update 5.0 – May 30, 2020

Dear Families,

Over the past few months, County staff, residents and families have teamed up to keep COVID-19 out of our Long-Term Care and Seniors Services (LTCSS) facilities. We're fortunate to have remained COVID-19 free to date and I credit our staff, our residents and you for helping us keep our homes safe. This pandemic has been hard on all County residents, particularly our seniors.

We continue to see COVID-19 impact long-term care and retirement homes at a much higher rate, and I know I echo public health authorities in sharing with our family members that these facilities will remain at the heart of this pandemic with increased protocols for the foreseeable future. As you know, our efforts have been extensive and with guidance from the province, our local Chief Medical Officer of Health, our Medical Directors, and our entire Management Team, we will continue to take every step possible to protect our residents. We trust you will continue to work with us to do the same.

We know the changes in our social and recreational programs and continued separation from families is not easy for anyone, and as time passes, this becomes more challenging with each new day. Recognizing this hardship and the impact on overall health, we are working hard to find new ways to enrich the lives of our residents and find opportunities to connect them with you, in a safe and measured fashion. Our residents are our number one priority, and as such, we are excited to share some new program developments to help achieve these goals during this pandemic:

Update* OUTDOOR PROGRAMS

As the weather improves, the County is looking for creative ways to allow our residents to stay safe and enjoy the warmth and sun with outdoor activities. We understand that being isolated in a home isn't easy for anyone. I must stress, that these outdoor activities will be done as safely as possible and we will be reducing any chance of contact with the general public in all instances. Activity and quality of life is important for everyone's resiliency but the safety of all the residents and staff in our facilities is our main priority.

Walking Program – Residents can now enjoy strolls outdoors with these new guidelines:

- Residents must wear a procedural mask at all times during their walks;
- Residents will **always** be accompanied by staff to ensure masks are worn and physical distancing of 2 meters/6 feet is maintained; and
- No more than 5 people can participate at one time to conform with Public Health.

Patio Activities – Residents can enjoy the outdoors with the following measures in place:

- Patio furniture has been rearranged & stickers posted to ensure physical distancing;
- No more than 5 people are permitted on patio at once to comply with Public Health.

Bus/Van Trips – Short day trips for community enjoyment will be offered as follows:

- Trips will limit to 5 people on the bus to comply with Public Health guidelines;
- All residents must wear a procedural mask at all times; and
- Strict cleaning measures for the bus will be taken before and after each trip.

Tri-Bicycle Outings – Enjoying the sun and surroundings, we are excited to offer our residents a unique experience on our specialized bikes driven by cyclists as follows:

- Bicycle outings will permit only one resident passenger per ride;
- All residents must wear a procedural mask at all times during this activity; and
- Strict cleaning measures for the bicycle will be taken before and after each trip.

Gardening Programs – Gardening activities for outdoor enjoyment will be offered:

- Residents participating will garden a minimum of 2 meters from others;
- No more than 5 people will be in a gardening program at one time; and
- Residents must wear a mask at all times during these activities.

***New** SUPERVISED OUTDOOR FAMILY VISITS**

Our County staff want to see our residents enjoy time with their families and we know this is both important and missed very much by our residents and you. Restricting people coming into our homes was the right decision to protect our residents, and we must continue to enforce this at all times. However, with the nice weather now upon us, we have designed a new way to bring families together to visit our residents in an “outdoor” setting that provides all the necessary precautions to keep our residents safe.

We will be permitting “supervised outdoor” visits with family in a specifically designed patio location. This will include protective barriers to ensure **physical distancing of 2 meters/6 feet between the resident and their family member** to prevent infection.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

All visits MUST be booked with staff in advance ✓

Please wear a mask when visiting ✓

Maintain physical distancing (2 meters) – No Physical contact ✓

Please do not bring any pets while visiting ✓



For details, please contact our Program & Support Services Supervisors at the following:

Home	Contact	Phone Ext.	Email
Georgian Manor	Christina Thorpe	3080	Christina.thorpe@simcoe.ca
Simcoe Manor	Rosa Athanassoulis	5080	rosa.athananssoulis@simcoe.ca
Sunset Manor	Jenn Baulke	6080	jenn.baulke@simcoe.ca
Trillium Manor	Crystal Rosewell	4080	Crystal.rosewell@simcoe.ca

Update* COVID-19 TESTING

As part of the provincial testing strategy, approximately 1,000 staff at all 4 County long-term care homes, as well as Simcoe Village and Georgian Residences have undergone COVID-19 testing and I am pleased to advise that ALL tests were negative! Please be reassured that we continue to monitor our residents daily and should we identify potential symptoms in any individual, we work closely with Public Health to ensure they are tested at that time.

Reminder* STAFF APPRECIATION

This year, in light of the additional pressures and work requirements associated with COVID-19, now more than ever we want to let our staff know how grateful we are for their tremendous care, commitment, and support for our residents. As such, we have expanded our appreciation efforts and our continuing to salute our staff beyond National Nursing Week (May 11-17th) to include all of our employees during the entire month of May & June!

As you know, our staff have really stepped up during this health crisis, working more hours in challenging times and adapting to new protocols to ensure the safety of our residents. Due to restrictions, staff are now performing many of the duties that are generally undertaken by a pool of more than 400 amazing volunteers across our 4 locations.

We are grateful to our family members who have shown such amazing support for our staff. Your parades, letters, signs, pictures and other creative demonstrations of appreciation has really kept spirits up and morale as high as possible during these difficult times. A sincere thank you for your kind gestures and tremendous show of support. I have included a special video message in celebration of our staff: <https://youtu.be/cjLEnrXar24>

Families can continue to see the many acts of kindness and positivity during COVID-19 at www.simcoe.ca/strongertogether or by following @countyofsimcoe on Instagram, @simcoecounty on Twitter or like" @CountyofSimcoe on Facebook.

We thank you for your support and understand that following the necessary health protocols has not been easy. We want to assure you that we will continue to do everything we can to keep your loved ones safe. Stronger together, we can and will get through this.

Sincerely,

Jane