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Dear Family Member,

## Region of Durham Long-Term Care COVID-19 Update

The Regional  
Municipality  
of Durham

Social Services  
Department

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In this Thanksgiving season I wanted to remind you how thankful we, at the Region of Durham, are for your support during these difficult times. Your understanding of the challenges we face has been most appreciated and your presence in the lives and care of the residents we serve has made all the difference in their wellbeing. Thank you!

As we move into the fall season, there have been a number of updates in the long-term care sector. Please take the time to review the following and direct any questions you may have to your respective home.

### Visitors in COVID-19 Affected Areas

The province has identified three geographical areas where community transmission of COVID-19 requires changes to the visitor policy in all long-term care homes. These areas are the City of Ottawa, the City of Toronto, and the Region of Peel. At present, none of the four Region of Durham homes are affected by this announcement but this may change at any time depending on the virus and decisions from the provincial and regional medical officers of health.

Homes in the affected area are closed to indoor visits of any kind. Essential visitors including caregivers may continue to visit but only one may be present in the home at a time. Again, this is **not** the case in Durham. Caregivers may continue to visit together, and indoor visits continue to be scheduled for our four homes. Should this change, communication will be shared immediately.

### Essential Caregivers

Residents or their substitute decision makers have the final choice in identifying up to two caregivers to support their care needs. Caregivers may include private care providers. Processes have been adopted at each home to register and train designated caregivers and to include them in the care plan. If a new caregiver is required due to a change in the resident's care needs or the unavailability of an existing caregiver, homes require advance notice to process new people. We request a minimum of one business day to process changes.

While caregivers may visit as needed, everyone is expected to comply with infection prevention and control practices. This includes wearing a surgical/procedure mask provided by the home as well as any additional personal protective equipment as directed by staff. As well caregivers are expected to maintain physical distancing as much as possible. Caregivers who do not comply with infection practices may be suspended from the home.

### Visitor Code of Conduct

The Region of Durham is committed to a community of care and respect. Though these are stressful times visitors must adhere to the code of conduct. Visitors who behave in a threatening or violent manner, who continue to speak aggressively after having been asked to speak in a respectful manner, or who refuse to comply with home policies will be asked to leave the building.

All indoor visitors must wear a surgical/procedure mask provided by the home during their visit. Cloth masks may not be used as a substitute. Cloth masks are allowed for all outdoor visits and are not provided by the home.

### Return of Services

Efforts are underway to resume as many services to residents as possible. External providers including hair salons, footcare, dental services, spasticity clinics, music therapy, and pastoral services are in various stages of reactivation at each of the four homes. Services will continue to be reintroduced as providers are aligned to COVID-19 screening and testing standards, and as homes identify a safe process for service delivery. Your home can provide more specific detail as to dates and expectations for service delivery.

### Summary

Our homes look much different than they have in past years as we work to keep residents safe and COVID-19 out. Your support in this effort remains vital. Please reach out to your home's leadership team if you have any questions in how you can best help.

*Laura MacDermaid*

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