Regional Municipality of Durham

Social Services Department

# Long Term Care (LTC) and Services for Seniors

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| 1. Title: Visitation to Long-Term Care Home during a Pandemic | |
| Policy #: PAN-09-03 | |
| Original: June 15, 2020 | |
| Revised: July 17/20, July 27/20, Sept 8, 2020 | |
| **Peer Group Approval: Rec/Therapy**  **Joanne Iacono** | **Date:**  **November 2, 2020** |
| **Also reviewed by:** | |
| **Senior Leadership Approval:**  **Laura MacDermaid** | **Date Effective:**  **November 2, 2020** |

### Policy

The Region of Durham Long Term Care homes will provide an organized process to allow for safe and secure visits to our homes. Region of Durham Homes will follow the visitor requirements outlined in Chief Medical Officer of Health’s Directive #3. The home will maintain a list of visitors. In an outbreak situation, Durham Region Health Department will provide direction on visitors to the home. The home has a role to ensure that the guidelines for visitors are adhered to.

### Purpose

To ensure there is a safe and organized process for those who visit residents in the Region of Durham Long Term Care Homes.

To provide meaningful, equitable, flexible and safe access to visits for all residents to support their emotional wellbeing.

### Definitions

### 3.1 General Visitor

### A person who is not an essential visitor and is visiting:

* To provide non-essential services, who may or may not be hired by the home or the resident and /or the Substitute Decision Maker (SDM)
* For social reasons that the resident or the substitute decision maker assess as different from direct care, including care related to cognitive stimulation and meaningful connection

### 3.2 Essential Visitor

Must meet the definition outlined in Directive #3

A person performing essential support services (e.g. inspector, external health service providers, contractors, or a person visiting a very ill or palliative resident.)

Essential Visitors are divided into:

3.2.1 **Essential Support Worker:**

A visitor who is performing an essential support service for the resident or the home. E.g. Physicians, footcare.

3.2.2 **Essential Caregiver**

Someone who is designated by the resident and/or their SDM and is visiting to provide direct care to the resident (e.g. supporting feeding, mobility, cognitive stimulation, communication and assistance in decision-making).

3.2.3 **Other Essential Caregivers**

Government Inspectors and those visiting very ill or palliative residents.

### Visiting Procedures for General Visitors

* 1. If the Home is in suspected outbreak, all general visits will be temporarily cancelled.
  2. Indoor and Outdoor general visits will be scheduled in advance as per the homes process.
  3. A maximum of 2 general visitors per resident at a time. Each visit is at least 30 minutes long at least once per week.
  4. Prior to visiting any resident for the first time after this policy is released and at least once every month thereafter, general visitors will be asked to verbally attest to reading this policy.
  5. General visitors will be provided with information on Infection prevention and control and other operational procedures regarding visiting.
  6. General Visitors will be directed to a visitor check-in/screening area. The home will keep a list of those people who have visited each day
  7. General Visitors will pass the active screening protocol administered by home staff.

4.3.1. Outdoor General Visitor screening includes answering questions and getting a temperature check.

4.3.2 Indoor General Visitor screening includes answering questions, temperature check and providing proof to the home that they have tested negative for COVID-19 within the previous two weeks and no subsequently tested positive. Screening will also include attesting to not visiting a LTC home which is in outbreak or a resident who is self-isolating/symptomatic within the last 14 days

* 1. General visitors will wear face coverings/masks at all times as outlined

4.6.1 Outdoor general visitors are responsible for bringing their own cloth mask or face covering and chairs/if applicable.

4.6.2 Indoor general visitors will be provided with a surgical/procedure mask to wear in the home.

* 1. General Visitors younger than 14 years of age should be accompanied by an adult and follow all applicable infection prevention and control (IPAC) precautions.
  2. Visits will take place in designated areas (set up unique to each home/property) and physical distancing barriers and location will be determined. In determining the location of the visits, the home should consider staffing capacity and space availability.
  3. Visitors will be asked to arrive no more than 5 minutes before the designated visit time.
  4. Although the home is not required to supervise the visit, monitoring may be needed order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of residents.
  5. Visitors will be directed to a Visitor check-in/screening area. The home will keep a list of those people who have visited each day.
  6. The visitor will be brought to the resident visiting area.
  7. The Resident will not need to wear a mask
  8. There will be no pet visits.
  9. Based on the operational need, the home may have to limit the visit to the designated time organized by Recreation/Therapy/ Designate.
  10. Ensure that if they need to cancel the visit, they contact Recreation/Therapy/designate as early as possible.

### Visiting Procedures: for Essential Visitors

**General Procedures for all Essential Visitors**

* 1. Essential Caregivers must be 18 years or over.
  2. Visitors will be directed to a Visitor check-in/screening area. The home will keep a list of Essential visitors who came to the home each day.
  3. Essential Visitors will be given a visitor badge which identifies them as an approved visitor.
  4. Essential Caregivers must pass screening requirements. Screening consists of answering questions, having a temp check and providing proof of a negative COVID-19 test in the last 14 days with no subsequent positive test.

5.2.1 Caregivers need to verbally attest to the home that they have not visited another resident who is self-isolating or symptomatic or gone to LTC home in outbreak in the last 14 days without proper PPE.

5.2.2. If a support worker requires immediate access to the home in an emergency situation, the home does not need to ask for a verbal attestation of COVID-19 test result.

5.2.3 Government inspectors must be actively screened including temperature checks and are not to be admitted to the home if they do not pass the screening. Government inspectors do not need to attest to a COVID-19 test result in the last 14 days.

5.2.4 Essential visitors coming to see a Palliative/End of Life Resident must be actively screened including temperature checks and are not required to attest to a negative COVID-19 test result in the last 14 days.

5.4 Any visitor who has previously tested positive may resume visits when cleared by Durham Health Department. 14 days provided and asymptomatic.

* 1. Visits for essential visitors are permitted as follows and are subject to direction from Durham Public Health Unit

5.4.1 There is not a limit for support workers.

5.4.2 When the home is not in outbreak

* A maximum of 2 caregivers per resident visit, if the resident is not self-isolating or symptomatic
* A maximum of 1 caregiver per resident per visit, if the resident is self-isolating or symptomatic.

5.4.2 When the home is in outbreak – a maximum of one visitor at a time.

* 1. The home is responsible for providing surgical /procedure masks, gloves, gowns and eye protection (as applicable). If a visitor is unable to wear the required PPE, the visitor should not be permitted to have close physical contact (less than two metres) to the resident.
  2. There will be no pet visits.

General Procedures for Essential Caregivers

5.7 A maximum of 2 caregivers may be designated per resident at a time. The designation should be made in writing to the home via the Essential Caregiver Registration form (see appendix A.

5.8 Prior to visiting any resident for the first time after this policy is released, the home will be providing training to essential caregivers that addresses how to safety provide direct care, including “donning and doffing PPE and proper hand sanitization procedures. Essential Caregivers must verbally attest that they have read the home visitor policy

* 1. Essential Caregiver visits do not need to be scheduled. The length or the frequency of visit will not be scheduled.
  2. It is up to the discretion of the home to decide where Essential Caregiver visits will take place as long as proper social distancing can be maintained.
  3. Although the home is not required to supervise the visit, monitoring may be needed order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of residents.

**General Procedures for Other Essential Visitors ( Support Workers and those visiting Palliative Residents)**

* 1. Support Workers and those visiting Palliative care residents are not required to read and verbally attest to the Visiting Policy or review the IPAC training.

### Non-Compliance with Visitor Guidelines

* 1. Staff will refer any visitor who does not comply with the visit guidelines to a manager/supervisor.
  2. The manager/supervisor will ask the general or essential visitor to read the policy, MOLTC guidance document and supporting information.
  3. Assist the visitor to understand the importance of complying with the visiting guidelines
  4. Discuss with the visitor that non compliance may result in discontinuation of visits.
  5. Ensure that the visitor has had enough time to adhere to the guidelines.
  6. If a visit has had to be discontinued, ensure there is documentation to back up this decision.
  7. If a visitor has been temporarily prohibited from visiting, clearly identify the reasons why and identify the requirements that the visitor would have to meet in order for visits to be resumed.

**7. Roles and Responsibilities**

7.1 Nursing will:

7.1.1 Ensure any requests for general visits are forwarded to Recreation/therapy (designate).

7.1.2 Ensure that the resident is ready for the visit, dressed appropriately.

7.1.3 Ensure that residents who are having meals in their rooms with Essential Caregivers are adequately supervised.

7.2 Recreation and Therapy Team (designate) will:

7.2.1 Oversee the organization of the general indoor and outdoor visits to the home. This includes the scheduling, screening, monitoring of visits as well as evaluating the process.

7.2.2 Ensure the visiting areas are cleaned thoroughly following visits.

7.2.3 Ensure the resident is returned to the home area following a visit if the visit is off the RHA.

7.2.4 Ensure any items brought to the resident are taken to be sanitized as per the home process.

7.3 Infection Control Practitioner

7.3.1Ensure the IPAC training is organized and available for the Essential Caregivers.

7.4 Screeners/designate will:

7.4.1 Has the schedule of general visitors for each day.

7.4.2 Has a list of Essential Caregivers

7.4.3 Understand the differences in screening requirements for each type of visitor.

7.4.4 Ensure each visitor answers the questions outlined on the screening form

7.4.5 Ensures that each indoor visitor has provided proof of a negative result for a COVID test completed within the last 2 weeks (14 days) and subsequently not tested positive.

7.4.6 Ensures that each Outdoor and Indoor visitor is given information on Infection Prevention and Control.

7.4.7 Ensure Essential Caregiver complete the education and is given the policy and information sheet and completes a sign off

7.4.8 Maintains an accurate contact record of visitors as per home process.

7.4.9 Ensures that each visitor hand sanitizes before and after each visit.

7.4.10 Ensures that the visitor is wearing their own mask/face covering for an outside visit.

7.4.11 Ensures that the visitor is provided with a surgical/procedure mask for indoor visits.

7.5 Environmental Services will:

7.5.1 Work with Interprofessional team to develop the designated visiting areas and ensure there is proper distancing markings.

7.5.2 Ensure there is enough hand sanitizer, disinfectant available in the outdoor/indoor visiting area.

7.5.3 Ensure that any items brought to the resident are sanitized.

7.5.4 Provide guidance to other staff on the method of cleaning following visits.

7 .5.5 Ensure the designated indoor washroom has an enhanced cleaning schedule.

7.6 Administrator (designate) will:

7.6.1 Ensure that visits are following the outlined rules.

* + 1. Any non-adherence to the rules will be the basis for discontinuation of visits.

### References

* + Directive#3 for Long-Term Care Homes under the Long-term Care Homes Act, 2007 issued August 28, 2020
  + Ministry of Long-Term Care, Update to Visits at Long Term Care Homes, Sept 2
  + Ministry of Long-Term Care, Update to Visits at Long Term Care Homes, July 15, 2020

### Ministry of Long-Term Care, Resuming Visits to Long Term Care, June 11,2020

* + Ministry of Long-Term Care, Update to Visits at Long Term Care Homes, July 15, 2020

### County of Renfrew, Outdoor Resident Visits Durham COVID-19 June 2, 2020.

* + County of Simcoe, Family Visits during a Pandemic, June 5, 2020