

July 8, 2020

Dear residents and families:

After seeing a significant decline in COVID-19 transmission rates across the province, we are pleased to announce the gradual resumption of visitation to long-term care. On June 30, Health Minister Adrian Dix and Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry announced plans to ease restrictions on visiting long-term care homes. While essential visits are currently permitted, family and social visits will soon be able to take place at any long-term care facilities that have no active COVID-19 outbreaks.

We are in the process of developing our safety plans and will keep you updated on the date our facility will be open for social visits. Visitation may vary, depending on the ability of each residence to safely apply the updated provincial guidelines.

Essential visits shall be determined by the health authority or facility staff, and all visits shall be limited to one visitor per resident within the facility at a time (except in the case of palliative/end of life care). A visitor who is a child may be accompanied by one parent, guardian or family member. Outings for long-term care residents should continue to be limited to essential medical appointments.

We will continue to take every precaution to keep our staff and residents safe. This includes a number of practice requirements, not limited to: personal protective equipment (PPE), pre-scheduled visits, screening for all visitors, rigorously sanitized designated visitor areas, and engagement between residents/families and care providers on current infection protection and control practices, as well as proposed next steps. Visitors will be expected to bring and wear a mask for the duration of their visit. Each facility will also be submitting a written safety plan, and keeping a visitor list with contact information for each individual.

This decision was made after careful consideration and in consultation with our medical health officers. We understand the utter importance of protecting our most vulnerable citizens while restoring a sense of normalcy and reuniting families and loved ones. We will all play a part in ensuring the safety of residents and staff, and that will involve collaboration. With all of these precautions in mind, it is of the utmost importance that visitors stay home if you are feeling unwell. We continue to encourage families and friends to stay in touch with residents virtually or remotely if possible.

For further information on COVID-19 and long-term care visitation, please consult the BC Centre for Disease Control guidelines: http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID19_LongTermCareAssistedLiving.pdf.

For families with additional questions, requiring emotional support or needing assistance navigating the health-care system, please contact the VCH LTC Family Support Line at 1-844-824-2219 or 604-875-4953.

Yours sincerely,



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