

## **Nithview Community Long-term Care and Retirement Visiting Policy** **Effective Tuesday March 15, 2022 – Revised April 22, 2022**

The goal of this policy is to communicate the requirements as set out in the *Minister's Directive for COVID-19: Long Term Care Home Surveillance Testing and Access to Homes*. This policy reflects the following guiding principles:

- Safety
- Emotional wellbeing
- Equitable access
- Flexibility
- Equality

**In the Policy, LTCH refers to Long Term Care, Retirement Home, and Tower Apartment Residents as they are co-located, as long as we are required to follow Directive #3 and #5.**

### **1. Visiting - See Appendix B and C for more details**

#### **A. Definitions**

**Essential visitors** are persons performing essential support services. Essential visitors include, but are not limited to the following:

**A support worker** is a type of essential visitor who is visiting to perform essential support services for the home or for a resident at the home.

**A caregiver** is a type of essential visitor who is at least 18 years of age and is designated by the resident or their substitute decision-maker and is visiting to provide direct care to the resident.

#### **Essential Visitor (Care Giver) Designation:**

- The designation for a caregiver must be submitted in writing to: Retirement: Stacey Zehr and Long Term Care: Candi McGraw
- The decision to designate someone as a caregiver is entirely remitting of the resident or the Substitute Decision Maker.
- Residents can designate a maximum of four caregivers (unless more than two caregivers were already designated prior to December 14)

- Residents and SDM may not continuously change a designation in order to increase the number of people permitted to enter the home (residents with high support needs will be permitted to switch caregivers to provide for a break)
- Unvaccinated Visitors will limit visits with residents who are not isolating to designated areas (visiting room on 1<sup>st</sup> floor)

**A General Visitor:** A General Visitor is a person who is not an Essential Visitor and visits:

- For social reasons (e.g., family members and friends of resident);
- To provide non-essential services (may or may not be hired by the home or the resident and/or their substitute decision-maker); and/or
- As a prospective resident taking a tour of the home.
- Prior to visiting any resident for the first time, and once every month thereafter, all Essential Visitors (caregivers) and General Visitors, must attest to having reviewed the visitor education that is available on the Tri County Mennonite Homes Website; <http://tcmhomes.com/>.

**LTC** – General Visitors are permitted unless a resident is isolating and on Droplet and Contact Precautions, or the home is advised by local Public Health Unit to stop general visits (e.g., during an outbreak).

- General visitors with the exception of children under the age of 5 will need to provide proof of vaccination to visit in resident home areas.
- General visitors under the age of 14 must be accompanied by an adult
- Up to 4 visitors (including essential) total are permitted per resident at one time
- Outdoor visits are permitted, and vaccination requirements do not apply to outside visits.
- Unvaccinated General Visitors will limit visits with residents who are not isolating to designated areas (visiting room on 1<sup>st</sup> floor)

**Retirement Home** – General Visitors are permitted unless a resident is isolating and on Droplet and Contact Precautions, or the home is advised by local Public Health Unit to stop general visits (e.g., during an outbreak).

- Unvaccinated general visitors will be required to have visits in designated visiting rooms on 1<sup>st</sup> floor or outside.
- If a resident is in isolation general visitors will not be permitted.
- The number of general visitors should be based on the capacity of the location where the visit will take place and should allow sufficient space for physical distancing
- There are no sector limits on number of visitors permitted for outdoor visits
- It is recommended that windows be opened to allow for air circulation during in-suite visits

- Medical mask and must be worn for the duration of the visit by visitor(s) at all times and resident(s) as tolerated.

## **B. Visiting Requirements**

Visitors will need to provide proof of vaccination. This proof must be in the form of Ministry receipt of the 2nd dose received. (Fully immunized definition is an individual has received the total required number of doses of a COVID-19 vaccine approved by Health Canada (e.g., both doses of a two-dose vaccine series, or one dose of a single-dose vaccine series; or an individual received their final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days ago).

**Fully vaccinated** individuals must have received all required doses (e.g., 2 doses in a 2-dose series); the 14 days post-final dose to be considered fully immunized does not apply

Prior to visiting any resident for the first time, and once every month thereafter, all Essential Visitors (caregivers) and General Visitors must attest to having reviewed the visitor education available on the Tri-County Mennonite Homes Website;  
<http://tcmhomes.com/>.

If a visitor arrives who cannot attest to having completed the education, a tablet will be available, and the front door staff will assist the visitor to complete the process.

## **C. Visiting Hours**

Visits are to take place **Monday to Sunday**. Visiting hours are from 6:00 AM to 8:00PM. There is no limit to frequency or length of visit within the visiting hours.

## **2. Testing Requirements**

(for Essential Caregivers, General visitors, Contractors, and Volunteers)

### **A. Indoor Visits**

All visitors will be required to participate in **Surveillance Rapid Antigen** testing. Testing will take place at the testing clinic. All visitors must actively screened and participate in Rapid Antigen Testing upon entry to be permitted entry including for outdoor visits. Visitors are required to keep receipt of their tests if they wish to return on the same calendar day.

### **B. Outdoor Visits**

All outdoor visitors must be actively screened prior to visit.

**\*\* Non-Adherence to these guidelines and avoiding being tested** will result in your visits being prohibited\*\*

#### **D. Minors (ages 5-18)**

All individuals entering the home ages 5-18 must complete screening, show proof of vaccination and have a surveillance rapid antigen test upon entry. **Parental consent is required** for minors (individuals under 18 years of age) that undergo testing. If consent is not given and/or testing is refused, the individual is not permitted to enter the home. For detailed information on requirements, refer to the [Minister of Long-Term Care's Directive COVID-19: Long-term care home surveillance testing and access to homes](#).

#### **E. Staff Testing Requirements**

All staff will follow testing requirements daily. Surveillance Rapid Antigen testing will take place at Nithview Community 7 days per week.

Any staff showing symptoms of COVID-19 will require isolation and negative PCR test in the community or at Nithview Community symptomatic testing clinic (available twice per week) prior to returning to work.

**\*\* Non-Adherence to these guidelines** will result in you not being able to work.

### **3. Absences** (see Appendix B and C)

#### **A. Definitions**

There are four types of absences. The definitions/conditions for resident absences are as follows:

**Medical absences** are absences to seek medical and/or health care and include: Outpatient medical visits and a single visit (less than or equal to 24 hours in duration) to the Emergency Department.

All other medical visits (e.g., admissions/transfers to other health care facilities, multi-night stays in the Emergency Department)

**Compassionate/palliative absences** are absences that include but are not limited to absences for the purposes of visiting a dying loved one.

**Short-term (day) absences** are absences that are less than or equal to 24 hours in duration. There are two types of short term (day) absences:

- Essential absences include absences for reasons of groceries, pharmacies, and outdoor physical activity
- Social absences include absences for all reasons not listed under medical, compassionate/palliative, and/or essential absences that do not include an overnight stay.

**Overnight Temporary absences** include absences involving two or more days and one or more nights for non-medical/social reasons.

**Please see Appendix B and C for snapshot of requirements for absences**

*\*\*Any travel outside of Canada must follow Canada Quarantine Act. \*\**

## **B. Approval for Absences**

As per Directive #3, residents will not be restricted or denied absences for medical or palliative, or compassionate reasons at any time. This includes when a resident is in isolation or when a home is in an outbreak. In these situations, the home will consult with the Local Public Health Unit.

**C. Day absences** - Refer to appendix B and C for more details.

All residents are strongly encouraged to follow all public health guidelines when out for all types of absences.

**D. Overnight absences** -Refer to Appendix B and C for more details

**E. Requirements upon return/admission/transfer to home**

Please refer to Appendix B and D

## **4. Personal Protective Equipment**

**Staff** are required to comply with universal masking at all times (**medical mask**) even when they are not delivering direct patient care, including in administrative areas. During their breaks, to prevent staff-to-staff transmission of COVID-19, staff must remain two meters from others at all times and be physically distanced before removing their medical mask for eating and drinking. Masks must not be removed when staff are in contact with residents and/or in designated resident areas.

**Visitors** must wear a **medical mask** at all times during indoor visits and outdoor visits.

**Residents** must be encouraged and assisted to wear a **medical mask or non-medical mask**, as tolerated, when receiving direct care from staff, when in common areas with other residents (with the exception of meal times), and when receiving a visitor indoor or outdoor.

Exceptions to the masking requirements are as follows:

- Children who are younger than 2 years of age;
- Any individual (staff, visitor, or resident) who is being accommodated in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005; and/or
- any individual (staff, visitor, or resident) who is being reasonably accommodated in accordance with the Human Rights Code.
- Have a medical condition that inhibits their ability to wear a mask
- Are unable to put on or remove their mask without assistance from another person.

#### **A. Physical Distancing**

Physical distancing (a minimum of 2 meters or 6 feet) must be practiced at all times by every individual in the LTCH to reduce the transmission of COVID19.

The following are exceptions to physical distancing:

- for the purposes of providing direct care to the resident;
- for the purposes of a compassionate/palliative visit

### **5. Active Screening of All Persons.**

(Including Staff, Visitors, and Residents Returning to the Home).

**All individuals must be actively screened** for symptoms and exposure history for COVID-19 before they are allowed to enter the LTCH and Retirement Home. For clarity, **staff and any visitors** must be actively screened **once per day at the beginning of their shift or visit.**

**A.** First responders are permitted entry without screening in emergency situations.

**B.** Residents returning to the LTCH following an absence who fail active screening must be permitted entry but isolated on Droplet and Contact Precautions and tested for COVID-19 as per the COVID-19: Provincial Testing Requirements Update.

**Any staff or visitor who fails active screening** (i.e., having symptoms of COVID-19

and/or having had contact with someone who has COVID-19) must not be allowed to enter the Nithview Community advised to go home immediately to self-isolate and encouraged to be tested. Visitors will be encouraged to follow up with testing at a testing center.

Exception where individuals who fail screening may be permitted entry to the home:

- Visitors for imminently palliative residents must be screened prior to entry. If they fail screening, they will be permitted entry, and we will ensure that they wear a medical (surgical/procedural) mask, eye protection, gown and maintain physical distance from other residents and staff.

## **Appendix A: Testing Process for Visitors and Staff**

### **ALL FULLY VACCINATED VISITORS, including Essential Caregivers, General visitors, Contractors, and Volunteers**

- Surveillance Rapid Antigen Testing will take place at the Nithview Community Clinic after Active Screening is passed at the front entrance. All visitors will be tested at the testing clinic.
- Building Aides will be completing the testing process for all visitors. Once the Rapid Test is preformed, the visitor will wait 15 minutes in the Auditorium waiting area, to ensure their result is negative. If the Rapid test is positive, the visitor will be asked to exit the building immediately, and to contact Public Health for further direction.
- A receipt will be provided following the Rapid Test. Visitors are to keep a copy of their receipt. Test results will be valid for 1 calendar day.

### **STAFF:**

- Surveillance Rapid Antigen testing will take place at Nithview Community, seven days per week.
- Team member are to report to testing clinic at the start of their shift (maximum 3 hours after shift started)
- All testing results will be kept on record in the testing clinic.
- Symptomatic PCR testing will be available at Nithview **3 days per week**. Team members who require a symptomatic test will be required to contact Scheduling to book a test or may have a PCR test in the community (whichever option is available first).



**Appendix B - Retirement Home Absence Requirements- Taken from Retirement Homes Policy to Implement Directive #3**

Absences	Requirements
<p><b>Short Term (Day) Absence</b></p> <p>Essential outing and Social outing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Homes must allow short term absences regardless of reason.</li> <li>Residents must follow public health measures during the absence.</li> <li>Active screening is required on return.</li> <li>If the resident has been exposed to a known COVID-19 case during their absence, they must be tested for COVID-19 with a PCR test on return to the home and isolate. If timely PCR tests are unavailable, homes must perform 2 RATs separated by 24-48 hours, the first of which will be administered within 24 hours of returning to the home. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residents who are fully vaccinated and boosted (3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> dose) will be isolated until a PCR or RAT is taken on day 5 (if negative isolation may be discontinued). Residents who are not fully vaccinated and/or have not been boosted (3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> dose) are required to isolate for 10 days from last contact (regardless of test results).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Temporary (Overnight) Absence</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Homes must allow overnight absences regardless of reason.</li> <li>Residents must follow public health measures during the absence.</li> <li>Active screening on return.</li> <li>All residents, regardless of vaccination status, are required to perform a RAT and a PCR test on day 5 of return. No isolation is required unless the resident receives a positive test result. If a timely PCR test is not available, on day 5 of return 2 RATs 24 hours apart may be used as an alternative.</li> <li>Homes must not deny entry to residents into their home while awaiting testing results and must not impose isolation of residents.</li> </ul>

**Retirement Home Absence Requirements- Taken from Retirement Homes Policy to Implement Directive #3 cont.**

<b>Temporary (Overnight) Absence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Homes must allow overnight absences regardless of reason.</li><li>• Residents must follow public health measures during the absence.</li><li>• Active screening on return.</li><li>• All residents, regardless of vaccination status, are required to perform a RAT and a PCR test on day 5 of return. No isolation is required unless the resident receives a positive test result.</li><li>• If a timely PCR test is not available, on day 5 of return 2 RATs 24 hours apart may be used as an alternative.</li><li>• Homes must not deny entry to residents into their home while awaiting testing results and must not impose isolation of residents.</li></ul>
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## Appendix C

### Long-Term Care Visitor, Absences & Social Gatherings Snapshot As of March 14, 2022

		Requirements	
		Non-outbreak	Outbreak/ Resident in Quarantine
<b>VISITORS</b> Masks required at all times. Eating and drinking not permitted except where a home is able to provide designated space  Up to four visitors (including caregivers) per resident at a time (unless in outbreak or quarantine)  Visitors need to follow the individual home's vaccination policy	<b>Essential – Caregivers</b> Maximum four designated (unless previously designated)	Physical distancing with the resident not required  May support in dining room, join in activities  Must be screened and tested to enter home	One caregiver per visit may support in resident's room or quarantine room
	<b>General Visitors</b> N/A	<b>New:</b> Physical distancing with the resident not required  May support in dining room, join in activities  Must be screened and tested to enter home	Not permitted, unless visiting a resident receiving end of life care
		Requirements*	
		All Residents	Outbreak/ Resident in Quarantine
<b>ABSENCES</b> Medical mask required, follow IPAC, active screening on return  Testing and isolation requirements following an absence are set out in the Long-Term Care Guidance Document and the COVID-19 Guidance: Long-Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes for Public Health Units	<b>Medical, Compassionate, or Palliative</b>	Permitted	
	<b>Short Term – Essential</b> (less than 24 hours)	Permitted	
	<b>Short Term – Social</b> (less than 24 hours)	Permitted for all residents (regardless of vaccination status)	Not permitted
	<b>Temporary – Social</b> (2+ days or overnight)	<b>New:</b> Permitted for residents (regardless of vaccination status)	Not permitted
<b>SOCIAL GATHERINGS</b> Residents wear mask if tolerated, IPAC adherence, cleaning prior/after	<b>Organized Events or Social Gatherings</b>	<b>New:</b> No cohorting required Limited capacity in a room Social group activities should be in small groups	Advice of the PHU
<b>DINING</b>	<b>Communal Dining</b>	Cohorting of residents and physical distancing at table not required Physical distancing between dining tables as much as possible Buffet and family style dining permitted. Caregivers and visitors may join residents while remaining masked at all times	In-suite dining

## Appendix C Cont.

<sup>1</sup> Fully vaccinated as per [Ministry of Health's COVID-19 Fully Vaccinated Status in Ontario](#) guidance

<sup>2</sup>End of life care and medical exemptions apply, where one who is not fully vaccinated enters the home with limited access to only the residents' room. Must be screened and tested to enter home

The document is meant to be used as snapshot of the visitor, absences and social activities section of the Long-Term Care Guidance Document and the [COVID-19 Guidance: Long-Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes for Public Health Units](#). Readers should refer to the [COVID-19 Guidance: Long-Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes for Public Health Units](#) and the [Long Term Care Guidance Document](#) for full details of the policies and requirements including exceptions. Homes are encouraged to distribute this document to residents and their families.



# COVID-19 Policies: What Residents Can Expect in a Long-Term Care Home

(As of March 14, 2022 unless otherwise specified)



### All residents may\*...

- Enjoy the company of general visitors, consistent with the individual home's vaccination policy
- Have up to four visitors (including caregivers) at a time indoors, consistent with the individual home's vaccination policy.
- Enjoy outdoor visits, with the number of visitors based on the home's policy.
- Participate in group social activities, including games, clubs and exercises.
- Have meals in the dining room, including buffet and family-style meals.
- Leave the home for all types of absences, including social day and overnight absences.

\*Unless otherwise directed by the local public health unit or when isolating

### What temporary measures are in place to safeguard long-term care homes?

- All staff, students, volunteers, caregivers, support workers and general visitors must be screened and wear masks, whether inside or outside. Those visiting indoors must also be tested.
- Continued infection prevention and control measures will be followed, including distancing between groups and dining tables, masking, hand washing and enhanced cleaning.

### What if the home is in outbreak?

#### Residents can expect the following if the area of the home they live in is in outbreak\*:

- Group activities, dining and social gatherings may continue in non-outbreak areas if residents can follow public health measures.
- For outbreak areas of a home, residents will be cohorted in small groups for all essential activities. Group activities for cohorts may continue/resume if operationally feasible.
- Communal dining, non-essential activities and personal care services will be suspended or modified.
- Caregivers can still visit.

\*Unless otherwise directed by the local public health unit



### COVID-19 Safety Measures for Absences

(As of March 14, 2022 unless otherwise specified)



#### Whenever outside of the home, residents should do their best to:

- Wear a mask (as tolerated)
- Wash hands frequently
- Limit their contact with others. Avoid crowds and large social gatherings with crowding.

#### What happens when I return home?

##### When residents return from a day absence they will:

- Be actively screened
- Undergo rapid antigen testing and a PCR test on day five following the absence.
- Residents who are away frequently can choose to take a PCR test and rapid antigen test, on the same day, twice per week (for example, a PCR and rapid test on Tuesday, with both repeated on Friday). No quarantine is required unless a positive result is received.

##### When residents return from an overnight absence they will:

- Be actively screened and then monitored for symptoms twice daily for 10 days
  - If returning from a hospital\*: PCR or rapid antigen tested prior to or when returning home and quarantined until a negative test result can be obtained.
  - If returning from the community: be screened and quarantine on arrival until negative PCR test result or rapid molecular test result from day five test. Those residents who do not have 3 or 4 doses of a COVID-19 vaccine are required to quarantine for 10 days with a PCR test on day five.

Note: Residents who have been COVID-19 positive in the past 90 days may not be required to undergo testing and quarantine requirements when returning from an absence unless they have symptoms of COVID-19.

\*Assuming hospital is not in outbreak, resident is not symptomatic and/or had been exposed to COVID-19. If the hospital is in outbreak the PHU will advise on testing and quarantine requirements.

#### What if I come into contact with someone with COVID-19?

Residents with 3 or 4 doses of a COVID-19 vaccine:

- Screened on arrival and quarantined until a negative result is obtained from the day five test

Residents who are not vaccinated or do not have their 3rd dose:

- Screened on arrival and quarantined for 10 days with a PCR test on day five.
- All residents are still permitted to see their caregivers while in quarantine



## References

Minister's Directive: *COVID-19: Long-term Care Home Surveillance Testing and Access to Homes*, Effective: October 15, 2021

Ministry of Health, *Directive #3 for Long-Term Care Homes under the Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007*. Issued under Section 77.7 of the Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA), R.S.O. 1990, c. H.7 December 24, 2021 Effective: December 24, 2021. [COVID-19 Directive #3 for Long-Term Care Homes under the Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007 \(gov.on.ca\)](#)

Ministry of Long-Term Care, *COVID-19 guidance document for long-term care homes in Ontario*, Effective February 21, 2022. [MLTC Guidance Document](#)

Ministry of Long-Term Care, *Directive #3, COVID-19 Guidance Document for LTCHs, and Rapid Testing Merged F.A.Q.s*, Effective: February 21, 2022. [MLTC Pandemic Response F.A.Q.s](#)

Ministry of Long-Term Care, *Entrance into a home for travelers – New COVID-19 Variant of Concern*, December 1, 2021.

Ministry of Long-Term Care, *Long-Term Care Visitor, Absences & Social Gatherings Snapshot*, Effective February 21, 2022 [LTC Visitor Absences Social Gatherings Snapshot 2022.02.04 FINAL](#)

Ministry of Long-Term Care, *COVID-19 Policies: What Residents Can Expect in a Long-Term Care Home*, Effective February 21, 2022. [What Residents Can Expect in a Long-Term Care Home](#)

Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility (MSAA) and the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority (RHRA), *Retirement Homes Policy to Implement Directive #3*, February 7, 2022, Effective February 22, 2022. [Retirement Homes Policy to Implement Directive #3](#)