

Excellent health and care for everyone,
everywhere, every time.



September 17, 2020

Dear Family Member:

We recognize these have been particularly difficult times for families who have loved ones in long-term care and we thank you for your support. We want to assure you that Island Health's priority remains keeping our residents as safe as possible.

As you are aware, long-term care homes are at a high risk for spread of COVID-19 and related severe outcomes for residents. Under the direction of the Provincial Health Officer, significant measures are in place to mitigate the risk, such as restricting visiting to essential visitors and one designated social visitor, greeters at all long term care homes who screen staff and visitors, limits on group activities, and social /physical distancing in dining rooms. These measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of a COVID-19 outbreak in this particularly vulnerable group of people.

As we've been preparing for an increase in COVID cases in the fall, we've been reviewing our processes and ensuring they're as safe as possible. In an effort to best protect all residents in our facilities, we have multiple options in the event a long-term care home has an outbreak of COVID-19. Affected residents could be co-horted and remain on site, transferred to a COVID long-term care unit in another facility (if available) or transferred to a COVID-19 unit in a designated acute care hospital. The decision to remain on site or transfer will be made at the discretion of the Medical Health Officer in consultation with the resident's physician or the site medical coordinator, the resident's Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment (MOST) status and long-term care program leaders.

Should your loved one be transferred to a COVID -19 unit, they will remain at the unit until all symptoms have cleared and at the direction of the Medical Health Officer. In the event of a transfer for your loved one, we would definitely be reaching out and working with you on the plan and how you can be involved in the process. Please reach out to the team at the facility where your loved one lives if you want further details on the safety protocols we have in place.

Our priority remains the health and safety of your loved one and all residents in long-term care, while recognizing the impact these measures have on residents and you, their families. We appreciate all your support in these continued efforts.

Respectfully,

Carmela Veza

Acting Director, Long-term Care

Long-term Care

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