
St. Lawrence Lodge COVID-19 Bulletin

Issue Date: June 5, 2020

Purpose

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide current information regarding the Covid-19 pandemic and to inform people with respect to decisions made by the Home as guided by Public Health and Ministry of Health and Long Term Care policy decisions.

Covid-19 is likely the biggest public health crisis Canada has ever faced. Lives are at stake, including yours and your loved one's. The care and protection of long term care Residents – and the dedicated staff who look after them – has become a critical issue in Ontario.

Right now, physical distancing and LTC visitor restrictions are essential in combatting Covid-19. We acknowledge how hard this is for all concerned; however, it is necessary to save lives.

It is up to all of us to take steps that keep our loved ones, ourselves, and our communities safe.

Since we don't yet have a vaccine or cure, the best we have is prevention. We all have a role in preventing the transmission of Covid-19. We can prevent the spread of Covid-19 by washing our hands, avoiding contact with people who are frail and vulnerable, and above all, staying home. We are all in this together.

To help manage this global pandemic, the Ontario Government has issued Directives and Emergency Orders that will help Long Term Care Homes to take the steps they need to respond to, prevent, and alleviate the outbreak of Covid-19 and to provide care to our Residents and support for our staff during the pandemic.

Covid-19 News

Testing Guidance from the Province

- The Province issued Directives related to the level of testing that is to be carried out in Long Term Care Homes. The highlights include:
 - Any Resident with the following symptoms should be tested:

- A fever of 37.8 degrees or higher
- New or worsening respiratory conditions such as cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, nasal congestion, difficulty swallowing.
- Evidence of pneumonia.
- Potential atypical symptoms should also be considered.
- A Resident WITHOUT symptoms who lives in the same room as a Resident who HAS symptoms must be tested, as well.

Current Status

Comprehensive surveillance monitoring of all residents, employees, and other essential visitors continues and this week I am pleased to report that the Home remains negative for Covid-19.

Resident Co-Payment – Frozen for Six Months

The MOLTC announced this week that the resident co-payment rates have been frozen for six months. This means that the current co-pay rates remain the same until December 31, 2020. As a result, homes will not be issuing any co-payment increase notices to their residents, as is customary at this time of year, until more information is provided by the Ministry.

The Province also noted that the Ministry will ensure that homes do not lose any revenue resulting from this rate freeze.

COVID-19 Testing for LTC Staff

The MOLTC released a memo last weekend stating that the province recommends continued surveillance of LTC home staff effective immediately.

According to the MOHLTC, all LTC home staff should be regularly tested, at reasonable intervals, and recommends a minimum of twice in the month of June. Staff will include all individuals working in the LTC home (e.g., front-line workers, management, food-service workers, contracted service providers, etc.). Homes are asked to implement an independent approach to testing, as Public Health will no longer be performing LTC surveillance tests. All LTC homes will either have to use their own staff or partner with hospitals, EMS, or others to complete these tests.

At the Provincial LTC/RH collaboration table meeting, the Ministry indicated that the intention is to have homes that have the capacity to complete testing to start as soon as possible. The Ministry stated that they recognize that testing will be a challenge for homes.

At SLL, EMS has agreed to provide 2 clinic days onsite at SLL – June 9th and June 25th. It should be noted that this testing is considered “voluntary” as the Gov’t did not provide a “mandatory” directive to go with the guidance to Homes.

Fathers' Day Recognition – Sunday June 21st

Fathers' Day is fast approaching and we understand that this will be an unusual and possibly difficult day this year, similar to Mothers' Day recognition.

We wanted you to know that our Activation Staff members will be working on Father's Day Sunday and they have celebrations organized for the day.

Right now, they are in the process of preparing Father's Day special "toolkits" that will be provided to our male residents. These gifts are sponsored through the St. Lawrence Lodge Foundation.

Activation staff members will be taking lots of photos and posting them for you to view and enjoy. Because of the busy-ness of the day and the focus on our residents, unfortunately, the Activation staff will not be able to conduct scheduled FaceTime calls on Father's Day Sunday. Family members are free to contact their loved one by landline phone or other means, if available.

The Activation staff will resume their scheduled FaceTime sessions starting the Monday after Father's Day. We appreciate your consideration of our approach for this celebration.

Window Visiting with Residents

With the nicer weather recently, we are seeing more people coming to the property so that they can wave to their loved one. This is permitted as long as visiting restrictions are fully respected.

In particular, for those resident rooms at ground level, we wish to advise that Dr. Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health, recommends that if window visits take place residents should be asked to keep windows closed and social distancing must be maintained by visitors at all times.

With respect to the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak still declared in effect for the Province of Ontario, we continue to request that people stay Home rather than attend at the Lodge. Please refrain from coming to the Home, at least for a few more weeks, so we can continue to protect our Residents and get through this pandemic safely and unscathed.

Visitor Restrictions

St. Lawrence Lodge remains closed to visitors as directed by Provincial authority. Essential visitors only are permitted. These people include those visitors who are visiting a gravely ill Resident or those persons who are performing essential clinical health care services.

All essential visitors are actively screened before entering the building, including temperature checks. If they do not pass the screening, then they are not allowed to enter. Essential visitors attending with gravely ill Residents are limited to one person at a time.

All essential visitors are required to wear personal protective equipment at all times, while in the building. They are also expected to remain in the resident's room while on the premises as well.

Essential Items Drop Off – Reminder

We wanted to let you know that we now have an Essential Items Drop-off Bin located at the main entrance. This is in place so that external people do not have to enter the building to drop off previously approved items.

Essential items such as glasses, hearing aids, dentures, medications, continence products, and essential clothing must be previously approved for delivery by the ADOC for that level prior to delivery to the Home.

Essential items only can be placed in the Drop-off Bin Monday to Friday between 9:00 am and 6:00 pm.

Items must be placed in a clear plastic bag with the resident's name and the date clearly marked on the outside of the bag. Please note that all items will be quarantined for three (3) days.

Please do not leave food items in this bin.

Thank you for helping us to keep our residents safe!

Thank You

I wanted to say a heartfelt thank you, on behalf of our employees and our partners that are working diligently to care for your loved ones, for the warm letters and cards of thanks we continue to receive from family and friends of our residents. Your encouragement means a lot to all of us here at St. Lawrence Lodge. We hope to see you soon in person!

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Harrington". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Tom Harrington
Administrator