
St. Lawrence Lodge COVID-19 Bulletin

Issue Date: May 8, 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

- On April 9th, the Province issued new 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

I am pleased to report that the testing reported in the May 1st bulletin has returned as negative for Covid-19.

As you are most likely aware, the Province and the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Long Term Care have repeatedly pronounced their intention to test all residents and employees of provincial Long Term Care Homes.

For St. Lawrence Lodge, this testing was conducted under the auspices of the Health Unit and EMS Services starting with resident testing on Wednesday May 6th. All resident tests were completed that day and test swabs sent out to the lab for analysis. With respect to employees, their onsite testing wrapped up on Friday May 8th. We await the results which typically have been taking 5-7 days.

Mothers' Day Recognition Reminder

Further to our previous information bulletins, Mother's Day is fast approaching and we understand that this will be an unusual and possibly difficult day for all. We wanted you to know that our Activation Staff members will be working on Mother's Day Sunday this year and they have celebrations organized for the day. They say that they plan on treating your Moms like Queens. They will be taking lots of photos for you to view and enjoy. Because of the busyness of the day and the focus on our residents, unfortunately we will not be able to do Facetime calls on Sunday. They will resume through the regular process again next week. We hope you understand at this challenging time.

Window Visiting with Residents

With Mother's Day approaching, we have been asked if people can come to the Home and wave to their loved one from the property. Yes, 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.

We continue to request that people stay Home rather than attend at the Lodge. Please maintain distance away, at least for a few more weeks, so we can continue to protect our Residents and get through this pandemic safely and unscathed.

Visitors

Long Term Care Homes are closed to visitors. Essential visitors 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 to be 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 while in the building.

New Guidance for Long Term Care Homes Received This Week

All Long Term Care Homes received new Directives and other information from the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care this week. The newest Directives and information is highlighted below:

Additional COVID-19 Funding Announced for LTC

The MOLTC released a letter announcing additional one-time emergency funding for COVID-19 prevention and containment that will be available to the LTC sector. The initial disbursement of up to \$34,838,200 for May 2020 will be flowed to homes as outlined below:

- Every LTC home will receive a base allocation of \$12,000 and \$200 per bed to support the necessary incremental expenditures of LTC homes to prevent and contain COVID-19.
- Small and medium homes with B, C and/or D beds will receive additional funding of \$15,000 (for small homes with 96 beds or fewer) or \$10,000 (for medium homes with between 97 and 160 beds). This is intended to provide further support to homes that are facing greater prevention and containment challenges due to the older physical structure and living spaces within the homes.
- Homes with COVID-19 infection are expected to incur more costs as more efforts are needed for further prevention and containment, and in recognition of this, these homes will receive an additional allocation of \$10,000 per home and \$200 per bed. This adjustment applies to all homes with infections reported or resolved as of April 30, 2020. Homes with infection after this date will be addressed in the next tranche of funding. The additional per bed allocation applies to all beds in operation.

This funding is expected to cover any expenditure related to COVID-19. The LTC Provincial Association has communicated concern that the allocation will most likely fall short for some homes and that reconciliation may vary. As such, the Ministry has confirmed it will continue to seek input on the current process and will adjust as they go along.

Communications with Loved Ones

Our Activation staff continue to do a great job helping Residents connect with their loved ones. We have I-phones available should you wish to call, FaceTime, text, or email with a Resident. Contact the Activation Department at 613-345-0255 ext 4118 to coordinate a family session.

There is also a private Facebook Group for St. Lawrence Lodge Residents. Let the Activation Department know that you wish to join, give them your email address and they will issue an invitation for you to join the Group.

We have received enquiries about sending cards and messages through regular mail. Yes, we can receive and distribute regular mail items. We have a quarantine protocol that we use in advance of forwarding the mail to the recipient. I'm sure the greeting cards will brighten a special someone's day!

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,



Tom Harrington
Administrator