

ELGIN COUNTY LONG TERM CARE HOMES

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

December 19, 2020

[Elgin County, Ontario] – Elgin County was notified late this afternoon that during weekly surveillance testing for COVID-19 at Elgin's Long-Term Care Homes (LTCH), two (2) employees at Terrace Lodge Long-Term Care Home tested positive for COVID-19. Both employees are asymptomatic and in isolation at home. At this time, there are no other reported cases of COVID-19 among staff or residents at Terrace Lodge.

Terrace Lodge Staff continue to take all necessary steps to decrease the risk of spreading the virus and remain dedicated to the health and safety of our residents. Terrace Lodge staff immediately responded to the situation with direction from Southwestern Public Health to limit further transmission of the virus. County staff are making every effort to contact families of Terrace Lodge residents to inform them of the situation.

County staff are working closely with Southwestern Public Health on outbreak management and to identify who the staff members have been in contact with. Residents, staff and community members who are determined to be at risk are being contacted to prevent further spread of illness in the Home or in the community. Our medical team are closely monitoring the health of our residents.

Elgin County's LTCHs have, since the onset of the pandemic, taken steps to assess and improve preparedness for responding to coronavirus (COVID-19). COVID-19 is a viral illness that spreads like the flu and is hard to contain, despite everyone's best efforts. "We know that COVID-19 is particularly serious in older and frail individuals. We have put in place additional safeguards to lessen the potential for transfer of COVID-19", said Michele Harris, Director of Homes and Seniors Services.

To help control the spread of COVID-19, the Province has directed Long-Term Care Homes to declare an outbreak or suspected outbreak if a resident or staff member tests positive. All staff working in Elgin's LTCHs are tested every 7 days as per Ministry of Health directives. Any resident or employee that shows even the slightest evidence of a health change are immediately screened for COVID-19.

"We know this comes very soon after we resolved the most recent outbreak at Terrace Lodge. In fact, the outbreak was just resolved on December 16th. This indicates how serious our situation is in the community and how great the risk of community transmission is. While we continue to do everything we can to ensure we stop the spread of the virus within Terrace Lodge, it is undeniable that the risk is increasing as cases rise in our area and across the province. We need the community's help to contain this potentially devastating virus. It is essential that we respect all public health guidelines," says Warden Tom Marks.

The suspected outbreak is limited to Terrace Lodge, which is not connected to the other two County-owned Long-Term Care Homes, Elgin Manor and Bobier Villa.

Regular updates and changes to visitor restrictions will be provided to residents, families and caregivers.

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