Elgin County Long-Term Care Homes

MEMO

TO: All Bobier Villa, Elgin Manor and Terrace Lodge Residents and Families

DATE: March 10, 2022

SUBJECT: County of Elgin Homes COVID-19 Outbreak Update & Ministry Pandemic Measures Update

Dear Residents and Families,

Today, we are writing to provide an update on the current outbreak status across our three Elgin County Long-Term Care Homes (LTCHs) and information regarding the Ministry of Long-Term Care Pandemic Measures updates.

As of March 10, 2022, the following is the current **outbreak status** across the three (3) County of Elgin LTCHs:

- Terrace Lodge is currently in suspect outbreak on one resident home area with one (1) positive staff member who is isolating at home.
- Bobier Villa and Elgin Manor currently do not have any positive staff or resident cases and are not in suspect/confirmed outbreak.

LTC Pandemic Response Updates Just Released: March 9, 2022

- An estimated 86.3% of eligible LTCH staff across the province have stepped up to receive their third dose of COVID vaccination.
- Most residents have received at least a third COVID-19 vaccine dose and many have received a fourth dose of vaccine

Effective March 14, 2022: Changes in Provincially-Mandated Vaccination Requirements

- The provincial directive requiring homes to have a consistent vaccination policy will be revoked. Each LTC home will be responsible for its own vaccination policy.
    - "Effective March 14, 2022, the MLTC is shifting from a provincial directive that requires homes to have a mandatory vaccination policy to a guidance-based approach that continues to support homes with their employer-led policies and best practices".
- This shift does not change the critical importance of vaccination as a key defense against COVID-19. All Ontarians should be encouraged to get vaccinated, including receiving medically recommended boosters. This is particularly important for LTCH residents to ensure that they have the greatest level of immune protection as possible.
- County of Elgin Administration policy 1.35 "Visitors and Resident Absences During a Pandemic" outlining visitor vaccination requirements is under review and will remain in effect until such time as any amendments are approved.
- The Ministry continues to work with the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health to monitor trends and will respond as needed if for example, a new variant emerges.

Effective Monday, March 14, 2022: Changes to Visitation, Leaves of Absence, Social Engagement Opportunities and Cohorting

- All general visitors, including children under the age of 5, can visit homes. Visitors (including caregivers), with the exception of children under the age of 5, need to follow the vaccination policy of the individual long-term care home.
- Outdoor visits can be any size, space permitting.
- There can be up to 4 general visitors and/or caregivers visiting a resident at one time.
- All residents can go on social overnight absences.
- Testing of residents returning from day or overnight absences at established intervals will continue until further notice, to identify as early as possible any individual who may become infected with COVID-19 in order to reduce transmission in the home.
- Residents from different areas/parts of the LTC home can now come together for social activities. Cohorting is required for dining only.
- Social group activities can be larger in size while crowding should be avoided and masking continued, including for residents where tolerated.

General Reminders:

- A surgical/medical mask and protective eyewear continues to be required by all staff, students, visitors, support workers, and volunteers who enter the Home.
- Screening with each entry to the Home remains in place.
- An N95 mask, gown and gloves is required when visiting any resident that is in isolation and experiencing COVID symptoms and/or has tested positive for COVID-19.
- Rapid antigen testing is required on each visit and results must be complete before entering the LTC Home; visitors are reminded to adjust their visit time to include 15 minutes for processing of rapid antigen test results.
- Individuals who have had a confirmed COVID-19 infection will be required to resume surveillance testing 90 days post-infection (previously 30 days post-infection).
- Visitors are required to wear their mask and eyewear at all times, and, as such will not be permitted to eat or drink while in the Home. Visitors may attend the designated area to provide meal time support to their loved one.

Additional resources have been created and updated by MLTC to promote a more fulsome understanding of the anticipated changes:

- Key Messages to Support Residents and Families (EN)
- Key Messages to Support Residents and Families (FR)
- Visitor Absences and Social Gatherings Snapshot (EN)
- Visitor Absences and Social Gatherings Snapshot (FR)
- COVID-19 Policies: What Residents Can Expect in Long-Term Care Homes (EN)
- COVID-19 Policies: What Residents Can Expect in Long-Term Care Homes (FR)
- Pandemic Response Frequently Asked Questions

Homes staff continue to implement all required and recommended measures to support resident, visitor and staff safety and well-being. If you have any questions, please speak to a registered staff member or manager.

Thank you!

Michele Harris, Director of Homes and Seniors Services
Terri Benwell, Administrator, Bobier Villa & Elgin Manor
Christine Leonard, Administrator, Terrace Lodge