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HHHS Confirms COVID-19 Outbreak Declared at Highland Wood, Long-Term Care Home

As of March 15, 2021, Highland Wood, Haliburton Highland Health Services' [HHHS] Long Term Care Home in Haliburton has been declared to be in a COVID-19 Outbreak by the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit [HKPRDU]. Haliburton Highland Health Services has confirmed that 2 staff members have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus. HHHS has been vigorously working with Public Health authorities in managing the situation and identifying anyone who may have been exposed to prevent further spread.

"Currently the HKPR is in the "yellow –protect zone" and typically this determines that a second COVID-19 test is required to confirm results of the first positive test. Since we are experiencing an increase of COVID-19 activity in our community, HKPRDU and Highland Wood are acting cautiously and declaring an outbreak right away rather than waiting to receive confirmative test results for the staff members affected. Repeat tests for both staff members occurred today and results will be known within 72 hours. If the results of both tests are negative Public Health will re-evaluate the outbreak status of the home. According to guidance from the Ministry of Health for LTC homes, if one staff member, caregiver, or resident has a laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19, this must be considered an 'outbreak'," says Carolyn Plummer, HHHS President and CEO.

As per directives provided by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, stringent Infection Prevention and Control [IPAC] measures have been implemented in both HHHS Long-Term Care Homes since the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic. These measures include but are not limited to: ensuring staff work in only one LTC facility; actively screening all staff and essential visitors upon entry to the buildings; conducting regular surveillance testing of all LTC staff and residents; limiting visitors to only those deemed as 'essential caregivers' who must undergo regular COVID-19 testing; ensuring adequate supply and proper use of personal protective equipment at all times.

In addition to the above measures, Outbreak Protocols have been implemented to minimize potential spread at Highland Wood. These measures include immediate testing of all residents and potentially exposed individuals; isolating all residents; limiting admissions, readmissions, discharges or transfers at this time.

HHHS will continue to monitor these cases, work with Public Health Authorities and provide updates to the community to ensure COVID-19 is contained at Highland Wood.

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About Haliburton Highlands Health Services

Leaders in Innovative Rural Health Care

Haliburton Highlands Health Services, working with partners and accountable to our community, promotes wellness and provides access to essential, high quality health services including: Primary Care, Hospital (Acute Inpatient and Emergency Care) Long-Term Care, End-of-Life Care, Mental Health & Addictions Services and Community Support Services.