

COVID-19 Policies & Procedures

Title: Highland Wood and Hyland Crest COVID-19 Visiting Policy

Effective Date: April 2022

Approved By: COVID-19 Steering Committee

Revised Date: June 28, 2022

1. PURPOSE

Direction for long-term care home (LTCH) visits is in place to protect the health and safety of residents, staff and visitors, while supporting residents in receiving the care they need and maintaining their emotional wellbeing. These rules are in addition to the requirements established in the Fixing Long-Term Care Homes Act (LTCHA) 2021 and Ontario Regulations 246-2022

2. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy applies to Highland Wood and Hyland Crest.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

There is an ongoing need to protect LTC home residents and staff from the risk of COVID-19, particularly as LTC home residents are more susceptible to infection from COVID-19 than the general population due to their age and medical condition.

Rules for LTC home visits continue to be in place to protect the health and safety of residents, staff and visitors, while supporting resident in receiving the care they need and maintaining their emotional well-being.

This visiting policy is guided by the following principles:

- **Safety:** any approach to visiting must balance the health and safety needs of residents, staff and visitors, and ensure risks are mitigated
- **Emotional Well-Being:** allowing visitors is intended to support the emotional well-being of residents by reducing any potential negative impacts related to social isolation
- **Equitable Access:** all residents must be given equitable access to receive visitors, consistent with their preferences and within reasonable restrictions that safeguard residents
- **Flexibility:** the physical/infrastructure characteristics of the home, its staffing availability, whether the home is in an outbreak and the current status of the home with respect to personal protective equipment (PPE) are all variables to take into account when setting home-specific policies
- **Equality:** residents have the right to choose their visitors. In addition, residents and/or substitute decision-makers have the right to designate caregivers

Visitors should consider their personal health and susceptibility to the virus in determining whether visiting a LTC home is appropriate. Homes will maintain a list of visitors that is available for staff to access.

4. DEFINITIONS

Support Worker

A support worker is a type of visitor who is visiting to perform support services for the home or for a resident at the home. Examples of support workers include physicians, nurse practitioners and physiotherapists, provided they are not staff of the LTCH as defined in the LTCHA.

Essential Caregiver

A caregiver is a type of visitor who is designated by the resident and/or their substitute decision maker and is visiting to provide direct care to the resident (e.g. supporting feeding, mobility, personal hygiene, cognitive stimulation, communication, meaningful connection, relational continuity and assistance in decision making)

General Visitor

A general visitor is a person who is not a caregiver or support worker and is visiting:

- a. To provide non-essential services, who may or may not be hired by the home or the resident and/or their substitute decision-maker; and/or
- b. For social reasons (e.g. family members or friends) that the resident and/or their substitute decision-maker assess as different from direct care.

LTCH staff, volunteers and placement students are not considered visitors as their access to the home is determined by HHHS.

5. PROCEDURE

All Visitors:

Step	Description
1	All visitors will read and attest to reading/reviewing, at a minimum once per month the infection prevention and control information provided by the home, which includes putting on and taking off required PPE and performing hand hygiene. Public Health Ontario Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guidance document: recommended steps: putting on personal protective equipment • video: putting on full personal protective equipment • video: taking off full personal protective equipment • videos: how to hand wash and how to hand rub
2	Visitors will be actively screened for symptoms of and exposure to COVID-19 and will not be permitted to visit if they do not pass the screening.
3	Visitors must attest to not experiencing any of the typical or atypical symptoms of COVID-19.
4	For outdoor visits, visitors must be actively screened and must maintain physical distancing from others, including the individual they are visiting. Masking is optional as long as there is 6 feet distance between the visitor and resident.
5	Indoor Visitors must demonstrate that they are following the Antigen testing protocol detailed in the Minister's Directive: COVID-19 Long-Term Care Home Surveillance Testing and Access to Homes or as communicated by the LTC home management.
6	A maximum of four (4) visitors – including caregivers and general visitors – are allowed to visit indoors at one time; a maximum of ten (10) visitors are allowed to visit outdoors at one time depending on space. <i>In special circumstances (Ex: Birthday/ Anniversary) approval may be granted by the Administrator to accommodate larger groups.</i>
7	Compassionate exceptions to visitor restrictions are made for those visiting a resident at end-of-life.

Specific to General Visitors:

Step	Description
Screening	
1	All General visitors are required to complete active screening, and surveillance testing prior to entering the home - a rapid antigen test (RAT) prior to entering the home daily, upon each visit and wear a medical mask for the duration of their visit. Infants under the age of 1 are not considered visitors and may enter the home without being subjected to surveillance testing.
2	General Visitors <u>are not</u> required to provide proof of vaccination.

Specific to Essential Caregivers and Support Workers:

Step	Description
1	All Essential Caregivers are required to complete active screening, and surveillance testing prior to entering the home - a rapid antigen test (RAT) prior to entering the home daily, upon each visit and wear a medical mask for the duration of their visit.
2	Essential Caregivers and Support Workers will be the only type of visitors allowed when a resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, or the home is in a COVID-19 outbreak. <i>Note: During an outbreak and/or a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19, the Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit will provide suggested direction on visitors to the home, depending on the specific situation.</i>
3	Any number of support workers may visit the home.
4	Residents can designate a maximum of (4) four essential caregivers
5	To gain entry to the home, identified essential caregivers must show proof of being fully vaccinated with 2 doses of COVID-19 vaccine + 14 days.
6	An essential caregiver may not visit any other resident or home for 10 days (1 st day is counted as day 0) after visiting another resident who is self-isolating and/or a home in a COVID-19 outbreak where the essential caregiver was in a portion of the home affected by the outbreak.

Non-compliance for ALL visitors:

Non-compliance with the home's policies could result in discontinuation or termination of a visit(s) for the non-compliant visitor. In the event of non-compliance by a visitor:

Step	Description
1	The home will review the Visitor Policy with the non-compliant visitor including the Infection Prevention and Control measures.
2	Home management, including approval of Director of Care (DOC) or Administrator, will use their discretion to end a visit after repeated non-compliance to the Visitor Policy, provided: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The home has explained the applicable requirement(s) to the visitor; b. The non-compliant visitor has been given resources to adhere to the requirement (e.g. there is sufficient space to physically distance; the home has supplied PPE and demonstrated how to properly put PPE on); and c. The non-compliant visitor has been given sufficient time to adhere to the requirement(s).

3	<p>Home management, including approval of the Administrator, will use their discretion to temporarily prohibit a visitor in response to a repeated or flagrant non-compliance, including determining a reasonable length of time for the prohibition. Temporary prohibitions will be made only after all other reasonable efforts to maintain safety during visits have been exhausted, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Repeated attempts to explain and demonstrate how the visitor can adhere to the requirements are not successful. b. Visitor refusal to follow the requirements of the Visitor Policy. c. The visitor has negatively impacted the health and safety of residents, staff and/or other visitors in the home. d. The visitor demonstrates non-compliance continuously over multiple visits. <p>Note: The visitor will be required to re-read the Visitor Policy and review the Infection Prevention and Control measures before visits are resumed.</p>
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6. Communication

This policy and any updates from time to time will be communicated to resident families electronically at the email address on file and where no email is on file by regular mail. This policy will also be posted to the home’s website.

7. RELATED PRACTICES AND/OR LEGISLATIONS

Directive #3 for Long-Term Care Homes under the Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007
 Ministry of Long-Term Care “COVID-19: Visiting Long-Term Care Homes”
 New Fixing LTC Homes Act 2021

8. REFERENCES

Ontario COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open