
St. Lawrence Lodge COVID-19 Bulletin

Issue Date: June 12, 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

- The Province issued 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

Comprehensive surveillance monitoring of all residents, employees, and other essential visitors continues and this week I am pleased to report that the Home remains negative for Covid-19.

Outdoor Visiting Approved for LTC Homes

This week the Province announced that it would permit outdoor visiting at LTC Homes starting June 18th, or as soon thereafter when the Home is ready to accommodate visits. This is a much-anticipated announcement as the pandemic measures have been difficult for everyone these past few months.

Seeing and being with those persons you love is so important and it is great to know that our efforts to keep our residents safe and healthy have allowed the Province to lift some of the restrictions so people can reconnect.

Going forward, resident safety first will be our mantra and we know we can rely on our resident family and friends to not let your guard down and expose our residents to possible Covid-19 or any other infectious disease.

As you can appreciate, there will be strict rules and requirements that Homes must put in place in order to start gradually welcoming visitors.

At this time, we are hard at work preparing our game plan to open up to outdoor only resident visiting. We are targeting Monday June 22nd as the start date. This will give us time to hire screeners to monitor our visitors and to arrange for porters to assist with resident transfers to the designated visiting location on our grounds. We are working closely with Public Health to ensure we will have all of the necessary health and safety protocols in place to protect our residents during this critical time.

We appreciate your understanding and patience as we work to set this system up for you and your loved ones can reconnect in a safe environment for all.

There are a few key things from the Provincial Directive that we want to draw to your attention at this time:

- Visitors will be subject to strict health and safety protocols, including requiring all visitors to pass active surveillance screening every time they visit. Any one that fails the screening will not be allowed entry to the visiting location.

- **All Visitors must confirm that they have tested negative for Covid-19 within the previous 2 weeks prior to the visit.** (You can locate Assessment Centers by going to the Health Unit web site.)
- Visitor temperatures will be measured.
- Physical distancing is required throughout the visit.
- All visitors must bring their own face mask and must wear it for the duration of the visit.
- Visits must be pre-arranged.
- Visitors are restricted to one visitor per resident. Visitors must only visit the one resident they are intending to visit and no other resident.
- Visits will not be allowed when a resident is symptomatic and self-isolating or if the Home is in an outbreak.

There are a few other items of note as well.

- Visitors should bring their own suitable portable outdoor chair to use to reduce the amount of cleaning time required between visiting sessions.
- In order to maximize the amount of sessions available each day for visiting by all residents, each scheduled visit will be a maximum of thirty (30) minutes.
- Instructions on how to schedule a visit with your loved one will be posted on the Home's web site at www.stll.org later during the week of June 15th.
- Weather conditions may require that scheduled visits be cancelled. Protocols will be established to guide in the event of inclement weather conditions.

Please note that the wellbeing of your loved one is our top priority! So, outdoor visits will be based on their ability to safely take part without jeopardizing their health – or yours! Again, please check our web site mid next week for further details!

Fathers' Day Recognition Reminder – Sunday June 21st

Fathers' Day is fast approaching and we understand that this will be an unusual and possibly difficult day this year, similar to Mothers' Day recognition.

We wanted you to know that our Activation Staff members will be working on Father's Day Sunday and they have celebrations organized for the day.

Right now, they are in the process of preparing Father's Day special "toolkits" that will be provided to our male residents. These gifts are sponsored through the St. Lawrence Lodge Foundation.

Activation staff members will be taking lots of photos and posting them for you to view and enjoy. Because of the busy-ness of the day and the focus on our residents, unfortunately, the Activation staff will not be able to conduct scheduled FaceTime calls on Father's Day Sunday. Family members are free to contact their loved one by landline phone or other means, if available.

The Activation staff will resume their scheduled FaceTime sessions starting the Monday after Father's Day. We appreciate your consideration of our approach for this celebration.

Window Visiting with Residents

With the nicer weather recently, we are seeing more people coming to the property so that they can wave to their loved one. 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.

With respect to the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak still declared in effect for the Province of Ontario, we continue to request that people stay Home rather than attend at the Lodge. Please refrain from coming to the Home, at least for a few more weeks, so we can continue to protect our Residents and get through this pandemic safely and unscathed.

Visitor Restrictions

St. Lawrence Lodge remains closed to visitors as directed by Provincial authority. Essential visitors only 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 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 at all times, while in the building. They are also expected to remain in the resident's room while on the premises as well.

Essential Items Drop Off – Reminder

We wanted to let you know that we now have an Essential Items Drop-off Bin located at the main entrance. This is in place so that external people do not have to enter the building to drop off previously approved items.

Essential items such as glasses, hearing aids, dentures, medications, continence products, and essential clothing must be previously approved for delivery by the ADOC for that level prior to delivery to the Home.

Essential items only can be placed in the Drop-off Bin Monday to Friday between 9:00 am and 6:00 pm.

Items must be placed in a clear plastic bag with the resident's name and the date clearly marked on the outside of the bag. Please note that all items will be quarantined for three (3) days.

Please do not leave food items in this bin.

Thank you for helping us to keep our residents safe!

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