

Pandemic Response Updates

Ministry of Long-Term Care

Ontario 

Information Session for Families and Caregivers

March 2023

Why are we here today?

- To share updated relevant information for family and caregivers in Long-Term Care Homes



- Explain what measures remain in place and what measures have changed
- Listen to your comments and answer your questions

Context

- Both the province and the LTC sector successfully navigated a challenging respiratory season without requiring additional public health measures beyond those currently in place.
- We anticipate that COVID-19 is likely to fluctuate around the current level of activity and that the risk of severe outcomes has been reduced with high vaccine uptake and safe and effective therapeutics.



Context

- The Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC) is working closely with the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health (OCMOH) to normalize and embed effective COVID-19 response measures into routine operations, including winding down COVID-specific policies through a phased approach.



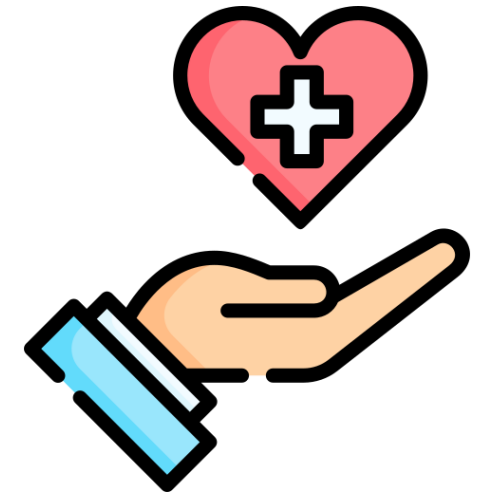
COVID-19 measures – What's New?

- Everyone still needs to wear a mask indoors. Visitors may remove their mask when they are with a resident in their room, or designated space, provided no other resident or staff is in the space.
- The recommendation for residents, caregivers and visitors to mask outdoors is being removed. Staff are recommended to wear a mask outdoors when in close proximity to a resident.



COVID-19 measures – What's New?

- Asymptomatic screen testing is no longer required for staff, students, volunteers, support workers, caregivers and visitors.
- While LTC homes still have the option to implement their own asymptomatic screen testing policies, it is not recommended at this time.



COVID-19 measures – What’s New?

- Active screening for symptoms before entering a long-term care home is no longer recommended. Instead, staff, visitors and caregivers will need to self-monitor for symptoms, known as “passive screening”.
- LTC homes will promote self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases, including having appropriate signage in place.



COVID-19 measures – What's New?

- LTC homes will continue to be required to monitor residents daily to detect the presence of infection, including COVID-19. However, daily temperature checks for COVID-19 will no longer be required.
- Residents do not need to be actively screened when returning from an absence.



COVID-19 measures – What's New?

- The ministry's limit of one caregiver at a time during a COVID-19 outbreak, or when a resident is symptomatic or isolating, is being removed.
- During an outbreak, LTC homes must continue to follow public health unit direction, which may include restricting general visitors from attending the home. However, caregivers continue to have access to residents, even in an outbreak.



COVID-19 measures – What's New?

- LTC homes will be able to hold activities without adjusting to optimize for physical distancing.
- LTC homes, with guidance from PHUs, are best positioned to structure activities based on staff capacity and their individual LTC home and resident populations.



COVID-19 Bivalent Booster

- Homes that have proof-of-vaccination requirements are strongly recommended to revisit their policies, with consideration to the current context of the pandemic and the Residents' Bill of Rights.



Implementation

- These changes come into effect March 31st, 2023. However, some homes may take more time to make this transition and update their policies.



Thank you! Questions?



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