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| TITLE: | Managing Visitors – COVID-19 (ON) | POLICY #: PAGE: | IX-N-10.44 1 of 12 |
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MANAGING VISITORS – COVID-19 (ON) POLICY #IX-N-10.44

POLICY:

To ensure a safe environment that follows provincially mandated protocols regarding physical distancing, this policy and procedure provides guidance on how visiting can be scheduled and facilitated at Sun Parlor Home in accordance with Provincial guidance. The role that families, friends, and visitors play in providing caregiving and emotional supports is important to the quality of life for long term care residents.

Visitors should consider their personal health and susceptibility to the virus in determining whether visiting a long-term care home is appropriate. Where it is not possible or advisable for in-person visits, the home will continue to provide virtual visiting options.

This policy is guided by the following principles as outlined by Ontario Health and the Ministry of Long-Term Care:

Safety: any approach to visiting in a Long-Term Care (LTC) home must consider, balance, and meet the health and safety needs of residents, staff, and visitors to ensure risks are mitigated.

Emotional Wellbeing: allowing visitors is intended to support the emotional wellbeing of residents and their families/friends, through reducing any potential negative impacts related to social isolation.

Equitable Access: all individuals seeking to visit a resident must be given equitable visitation access, consistent with resident preference and within reasonable restrictions that safeguard residents.

Flexibility: the physical/infrastructure characteristics of the LTC home, and its current status with respect to availability of Personal Protective Equipment, staffing availability, and any other key factors must be considered.

Equality: residents have the right to choose their visitors. In addition, resident and/or their substitute decision makers have the right to designate caregivers.

DEFINITIONS:

Team members: for the purpose of this policy, except where otherwise indicated, any permanent and contract, full-time, part-time, and casual: employee, agency staff,

contracted healthcare professional, paid trainee, student under clinical placement providing care to residents of the care community.

The definition does not imply or create an employer/employee relationship where none exists, and it is used solely in the context of this policy to differentiate care community team members from Private Caregivers/Companions.

Essential visitors:

Support Worker: a person visiting to perform essential support services for the home or for a resident at the Sun Parlor Home include a person performing essential support services. This may be direct (i.e. phlebotomy, physician, nurse practitioner, hair dressing) or indirect (e.g., food delivery, inspector, maintenance, or health care services)

Essential caregivers: a visitor 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, emotional support, relational continuity and assistance in decision making).

Palliative Resident Visitors: a person visiting a very ill or palliative resident.

Please note: any palliative residents that has a visitor who fails screening will have isolation precautions put in place. If this is the case visitors are to follow directions for visiting an isolation resident as described below.

General visitors: family members, friends or other individuals coming to the home to provide non-essential services or for social reasons and who does not fall into another category.

PROTOCOLS AND PRACTICE STANDARDS:

As the pandemic situation evolves in Ontario, direction regarding visits to Sun Parlor Home (SPH) will be adjusted as necessary keeping the safety and emotional wellbeing of residents and team members at the forefront. Visitor protocols may change as per the Chief Medical Officer of Health's direction or at the direction of the Ministry of Health or Ministry of Long-Term Care and will supersede this policy requirement.

The following baseline requirements must be in place for the home to accept any visitors. The home has established:

- A process for communicating with visitors about the resumption of visits and the associated procedures, including but not limited to, infection prevention and control (IPAC), scheduling and any home-specific policies.
- Protocols to maintain the highest of IPAC standards prior, during and after visits.
- A space designated to greet and screen visitors prior to their scheduled visit.

- **For outdoor visits:** an area for screening; an outdoor visiting area that does not require the visitor to travel through the home; outdoor chair to be provided for both resident and visitor as required.
- **For indoor visits:** an area for screening, designated visiting locations (providing enough space for physical distancing) that ensure privacy, seating as required.

Regarding all Visitation (Essential Caregivers and General Visitors):

1. Visitation programs and testing requirements will be restricted or enhanced based on local and Provincial Guidelines.
2. Visitors must comply with SPH protocols including;
 - a. participate in COVID-19 active screening,
 - b. undergo surveillance testing as set out by the home (not required for outdoor visits),
 - c. don the appropriate PPE as determined by the home based on the current prevalence of COVID-19 in the area and any provincial/local guidance,
 - d. Maintaining appropriate conduct while interaction with residents, team members and other visitors.
3. Visitor(s) must only visit the 1 resident they are attending, and no other resident (certain exceptions may apply, e.g. visiting parents that both reside at the home or support workers providing service to more than one resident).
4. Unvaccinated visitors (outdoors) are encouraged to maintain distance between themselves and the resident they are visiting but this is not required.
5. The number of visitors and/or caregivers allowed is a total of 4 for indoor visits (including visiting in courtyard space). There is no limit on outdoor visits using other spaces.
6. If a resident is symptomatic/isolating or the home is in outbreak, only one caregiver may visit at a time.
 - a. General visitors are not permitted in these scenarios.
7. Visitors should attempt to limit movement throughout the home if possible.
8. Physical distancing (2m) is not required between visitor(s) and the resident however, the visitor must maintain 2m physical distance from all others (residents, team members, etc.). Please take this into consideration when determining where to visit with the resident.
9. Alternative locations for visits:
 - a. Visiting outdoors with the resident can occur in the courtyard or on the SPH property.
 - b. Visits may take place in the home area lounges as long as posted capacity limits are not exceeded.
10. Visitors are able to accompany a resident to a meal or activity as long as they maintain mask placement and continue to distance from others.

Regarding Outdoor General Visitors (as allowed based on Provincial and Local guidance)

1. Visits may be monitored to ensure compliance with PPE and to support residents as required.
2. Outdoor visits may be cancelled due to inclement weather.

Regarding Indoor General Visitors (as allowed based on Provincial and Local guidance)

1. The indoor visitor must wear a surgical/procedural mask at all times while in the home, this will be provided by SPH.
2. Visits may be monitored to ensure compliance with PPE and to support residents as required.
3. Visitors may be cancelled in the event the resident is not feeling well/is in isolation or in collaboration with local Public Health authorities due to health and safety reasons.

Regarding Essential Caregivers

1. A resident may have 4 designated caregivers. Any resident that previous to December 14, 2021 had a greater number of caregivers is allowed to maintain those caregivers.
2. All Essential Caregivers must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as defined by the Province (i.e. 2 doses of MRNA vaccine) to enter the home.
3. Essential caregivers must be 16 years of age or older.
4. Essential caregivers will be determined by the resident/POA and approved by the Director of Care or designate following a review of the submitted Essential Caregiver Request Form.
5. Essential caregivers must review the following training items related to how to safely provide direct care prior to beginning visits. Retraining may be required based on non - compliance with the IPAC practices set out by the home:
 - <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/ipac/ppe-recommended-steps>
 - <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-fullppe-on>
 - <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-fullppe-off>
 - <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-handwash>
 - <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-handrub>
 - https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/nCoV/covid-19-fact-sheet-optimizing-masks.pdf?sc_lang=en
 - <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-hand-hygiene.pdf?la=en>

Regarding Palliative Resident

1. Palliative visitors are not required to book visits or participate in surveillance testing but must participate in screening and wear provided PPE.
2. If a palliative visitor fails the screening tool they are able to visit but the resident will be placed on isolation precautions as a Health and Safety precaution.
3. Visitation taking place for the purpose of compassion/palliation are allowed exceptions to the physical distancing rule.

PROCEDURES/RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ALL VISITS:

The administrator or designate will:

- 1) Distribute letters to family and residents as visitation directions are altered by the Ministry of Health or other government authorities.
- 2) Establish designated outdoor/indoor area(s) for visits to occur, while respecting the requirement of physical distancing and maintaining privacy.
- 3) Establish the flow of team member, resident, and family movement to and from visiting area(s), ensuring minimal traffic through the location/resident home areas.

The DOC or designate will:

- 1) Collaborate with resident/families/team members to determine and deem all essential caregivers.
- 2) Ensure visitors are educated about physical distancing, respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, IPAC practices, and proper use of PPE.
- 3) Appoint team member(s) to conduct active screening and provide education to all visitors.

The Scheduling Coordinator, Visitation Scheduling Coordinator or Designate will:

- 1) Receive contact from the resident/POA or designate and review homes visitation procedure/ expectations.
- 2) Be accountable for the process of scheduling visits including maintaining a standby list to allow for extra visits per week if open slots are available (general outdoor visits).
- 3) Cancel and reschedule visits as needed.

The Receptionist or Designate will:

- 1) Print the Visitation Daily Appointment and Caregiver Log and distribute to all home areas in preparation for next day visits.

The Visitor Screener or designate will:

- 1) Ensure that the visitor/caregiver has:
 - a. passed the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Active Screening Tool
 - b. reviewed the COVID-19 Visitor Information Package and the Managing Visitors Policy as appropriate
 - c. made the appropriate attestations related to their visit
 - d. undergone appropriate testing if required
 - e. the required PPE for their visit

The Resident Care Attendant or designate will:

- 1) Coordinate with the home areas and porter the residents to and from their visit if required
- 2) Supervise and monitor the visitation areas and provide support/assistance to resident during the visit, if required
- 3) Clean the resident/family visitation area between visits, including cleaning and disinfection of all chairs, tables and other surfaces

The Infection Control Lead or designate will:

- 1) Communicate if SPH goes into outbreak and cancel certain visitation programs as required

All Team members will:

- 1) Participate in and support visiting of residents as needed
- 2) Guide any visitors with PPE utilization as needed
- 3) Seek support from the nurse in charge and/or manager to address questions and concerns, including immediate advice to support individual resident and family needs

All Visitors/caregivers will:

- 1) Participate in the COVID-19 testing/screening process as directed by local or Provincial authorities (unless requiring immediate access in an emergency or palliative situation)
- 2) Perform hand hygiene and don the required PPE for the type of visit occurring
- 3) Practice physical distancing from team members, other residents and other visitors

References:

- Minister's Directive: COVID-19: LONG-TERM CARE HOME SURVEILLANCE TESTING AND ACCESS TO HOMES (March 14, 2022)
- MOLTC: COVID-19 guidance document for long-term care homes in Ontario:
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-guidance-document-long-term-care-homes-ontario>

VISITING YOUR LOVED ONE AT SUN PARLOR HOME DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC:

The Sun Parlor Home (SPH) team is excited to welcome you! Before visiting or providing care to your loved one, please review the following information. Every person has a role to play in responding to the current pandemic and each person's actions have an impact on innumerable other people. The guidelines, policies and procedures in place for visiting have been developed to keep you, your loved one and our team members safe.

COVID-19

COVID-19 is an extremely contagious illness. It was identified in December 2019 as a new type of coronavirus. It spreads quickly from one person to another through contact (physically touching a contaminated person or surface) and droplet (cough/sneeze particles) transmission. Symptoms range from mild to severe and, in some cases, can result in death. Symptoms of the virus may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure. Maintaining social distancing from others is crucial. COVID-19 is known to be easily transmitted to the elder population. They are at greater risk of severe complications from the illness due to their age and comorbidities.

Coronavirus prevention:

- ✓ Wash your hands.
- ✓ Don't touch your face.
- ✓ Cover your cough.
- ✓ Avoid close contact.
- ✓ Clean and disinfect.
- ✓ Stay home.

Your responsibilities while visiting:

- ✓ Answer all screening questions honestly and accurately.
- ✓ Comply with the required screening/testing as mandated by the Minister, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Long-Term Care.
- ✓ Wash your hands using alcohol-based sanitizer often. (See directions on proper techniques referring to elsewhere in this document.)
- ✓ Wear the provided Personal Protective Equipment required for your level of visit.
- ✓ Your face covering should fit snugly and cover your nose and mouth. If you do not have a face covering or are visiting indoors, one will be provided to you. Avoid touching the mask and remove it by the ear straps.
- ✓ Maintain a 2-metre (6-foot) distance from other people. If you are not an essential caregiver this includes the resident you are visiting.
- ✓ Visit only your loved one in the designated area. Do not travel throughout the building or visit other residents or team members.

- ✓ Be mindful of the time/time slot you have booked to ensure everyone has a chance to see their loved one.
- ✓ Be considerate and respectful while interacting with people, as this is a very stressful time.
- ✓ If required, let the Visitor Supervisor know when your visit is completed so they can assist your loved one as needed.

Sun Parlor Home (SPH) - Essential Caregiver Request Form

Complete this form and return it to SPH. A team member will contact you to review your request

Essential caregivers are designated by the resident or substitute decision maker and are visiting to provide direct care to the resident (e.g. supporting feeding, mobility, personal hygiene, cognitive stimulation, communication, meaningful connection, relational continuity, emotional support and assistance in decision-making).

Essential Caregiver Guidelines:

- Essential caregivers are required to participate in mandatory COVID-19 screening and testing prior to entering the Sun Parlor Home. This may include providing proof of PCR test results or receiving a rapid antigen test on site. The testing requirements are flexible and dependent on Ministry of Health directive, COVID-19: Long-Term Care Home Surveillance Testing and Access to Homes, as well as community provenance of COVID-19.
- The resident/SDM has the right to change who the designated caregiver(s) is/are at any time (this cannot be done only to increase the number of caregivers assigned). Each essential caregiver is required to have their own designated and approved plan.
 - Four caregivers may be granted per resident
 - Any residents that had a greater number of caregivers before December 14, 2021 is able to maintain those caregivers
- Based on the Sun Parlor Home Managing Visitors Policy (March 14, 2022) all Essential Visitors are required to be fully vaccinated as defined by the province (i.e. 2 doses of a MRNA vaccines) to enter the home.
 - There may be individual extensions provided beyond the March 14 deadline based on previous COVID-19 diagnosis, speak to a member of the team for more information if you feel you require an extension.
- The essential caregiver will wear appropriate PPE as determined by the home based on the current prevalence of COVID 19 in the area or Ministry/Public Health guidance. A surgical/procedural mask is required at all times, other PPE may include a gown, gloves and face shield. The required PPE will be provided when you enter the home.
- Meticulous hand hygiene must be maintained throughout the visit as well as adherence to all infection prevention and control requirements.
- An information package will be provided for your review including the home's Visitor Policy. You are required to review the policy and educational materials prior to your first visit. The team member reviewing your request form will confirm this has been reviewed and answer any questions you may have.
- Physical distancing is not required for an essential caregiver and the resident they are visiting; however, the caregiver must maintain 2-metre/6-feet distance from all other residents and staff.

Essential Caregiver Request Form**Resident Name:** _____ **Date:** _____**Family Member/Caregiver Name:** _____**Email address:** _____**Contact Number(s):** _____**Care Service you will be providing:**

- Direct Care (supporting feeding, hygiene, exercise, etc.)
- Emotional Support
- Cognitive Stimulation
- Other (please specify):

Please provide additional details of the care services you are planning on providing:

What are your preferences for when you would like to visit? (e.g. Monday, Wednesday, Friday).

Which part of the day will you primarily visit (please select only one):

- Day 8 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Evening 2 p.m. – 8 p.m.

**Prior to visitor restrictions, how involved were you with the above resident's care?
What was your involvement and frequency of care?**

**Please return this form to the Home directed to the Ward Clerks and a team member
will contact you soon!**

OFFICE USE ONLY

Request Reviewed By: _____

Proof of COVID-19 Vaccination visualized or copy of QR provided

Request Approved Request Denied

Reason Denied:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Family/Caregiver Notified of Response

Date: _____ By Whom: _____

Documented

Caregiver attests to reviewing Training information and Visitor Policy provided.