

August 12, 2020

Today we are happy to announce changes to our visitation process. We have begun inviting visitors and residents to share a hug or handshake at the beginning of their visit. In addition, we are allowing those comfortable with doing so to remove their mask during the visit if they maintain physical distancing.

Please be mindful of the following guidelines prior to your next visit:

- There are no washroom facilities for visitors,
- We ask that you do not arrive for your visit more than 5 minutes before it is scheduled. In order to maintain proper physical distancing, a visitor waiting area has been set up under the Chapel.
- The garden and benches are reserved for residents only,
- You may drop off items during a visit. Items must be in a clear bag, labelled with the resident's name and date,
- No perishable items are permitted,
- Please do not bring food or drinks to the visit.

Kathy, our resident services coordinator, has assumed the responsibility for managing all visits. She oversees the pre-screening which must be done for each visitor, the scheduling of appointments and management of the visiting area including on-site screening and visit supervision. We have 2-3 staff allocated to porter residents back and forth for visits. We are offering approximately 15-20 visits per day, 5 days a week. This is allowing each resident, who wants a visit, one visit per week.

## Q & A

### **30 minutes a week is not enough.**

We agree, it is not enough, but with approximately 130 residents who want visits, we are at our maximum capacity within our current hours.

### **Why can't we enjoy the garden space for our visit?**

This is a reasonable request but unfortunately we cannot accommodate due to the public health order requiring a physical distance of 6 ft be maintained and all visits

supervised. If we were to set up visits in the garden, other residents would be unable to use the space in order to obey the physical distance requirement. Having multiple groups in different locations would be a logistical issue.

### **Why are visits only set for regular business hours?**

These times are when we have the greatest number of staff in the facility which allows us to redirect staff to assist with visiting. We sometimes struggle with staffing levels on weekends; adding visits during that time period would be harder to manage. Families unable to meet during the regular hours should speak with Kathy.

### **My loved one is failing since visits were restricted.**

The social isolation and physical distance from family and loved ones is affecting residents. It has been five months without the regular visitation and care provided by family and friends. Although a decline may have naturally occurred during this time, there is no question that the restrictions, which are meant to keep everyone safe from the virus, are also putting residents at risk for other problems. Our recreation team has been working hard to keep people involved in programming and the current focus is getting everyone outside as much as possible. You can't be here but we can be, and we are doing whatever is possible to keep residents active, both physically and mentally. Virtual visits are still offered when time permits.

### **When do we get to visit inside?**

Indoor visits are more restrictive than those held outside. Only one visitor is permitted, and both the visitor and resident must wear a mask for the entire visit. The visit is still supervised and in a common space. In comparison, outside visits are the better option. All residents have tolerated the outdoor visits and with the warm weather, we can continue to limit unnecessary access to the facility while still ensuring all those who are wishing to visit have the opportunity. We will review the need should a situation arise.

### **If we sign a waiver will things get back to normal?**

Our Board of Directors is in the process of establishing a waiver to address the gap in liability insurance. This is an important step to protect the organization, volunteers and employees and must be in place before we can consider allowing visitors to enter the facility. A waiver doesn't change the restrictions put in place by public health. It is a safeguard but does not change the existing practices.