

December 10, 2020



Dear Residents and Family Members,

As we respond to the second wave of COVID-19 in Nova Scotia, we would like to share some of the plans we are putting into action to help ensure the safety of our residents.

We learned from the first wave that virus spread can be minimized by grouping nursing home residents who have tested positive for COVID-19 away from residents who do not have COVID-19. This means that residents with active COVID-19 are cared for by a dedicated team in a specific area, with clear clinical and infection control guidelines, enhanced staffing, and all appropriate equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE).

Based on these learnings and expert medical advice, a regional model for COVID-19 care has been established for long term care residents with active COVID-19.

Six Regional Care Units (RCUs) will be established across the province to reduce and manage the spread of COVID-19. The RCUs will:

- reduce the risk of infection spreading to other residents by transferring those who test positive for COVID-19 to a dedicated unit,
- have dedicated staff who work only in the unit, and nowhere else in that or any another facility,
- have clinical support available from Nova Scotia Health with experience in caring for residents with COVID-19,
- have the necessary equipment and supplies, including PPE, to safely and effectively care for residents with COVID-19,
- ensure that no unauthorized personnel or residents enter the designated care areas.

As soon as possible after a resident from Saint Vincent's Nursing Home is diagnosed with COVID-19, arrangements will be made for transfer to the nearest RCU to receive care. This is located at Ocean View Continuing Care Centre. Residents will remain in this RCU until they are no longer at risk of spreading the virus to others, which is usually about 10 days after symptoms started. They will then be transferred back to Saint Vincent's Nursing Home. Should your loved one require transfer, we will work with you during the transfer process so that you know what is happening and who to contact at the RCU for further updates.

Other recent news is approval by Health Canada of the COVID-19 vaccine. At this point we have no more information than what was released to the public. As soon as we have more details, we will be in touch with you.

Lastly, Saint Vincent's was chosen to be a pilot site for asymptomatic testing. Every two weeks we are asked to test all those who enter the facility to look for those who are positive but are not displaying symptoms. Anyone with symptoms should stay home and contact 811. This is an important surveillance tool; the more people tested regularly the better odds we have of finding any asymptomatic positive cases. Please consider being tested bi-weekly. See Debbie Coombs on the first floor.

We understand that these are uncertain times, and we want to assure you that we are taking every precaution to care for you or your loved one. The safety of our residents is our most important priority. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angela Berrette". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Angela" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Berrette".

Angela Berrette  
Executive Director

**COVID-19 Updates are available via:**

- Saint Vincent's Facebook Page: @SVNHCares
- Saint Vincent's website: SVNH.ca
- Calling our information line 24 hours a day: 902-334-1444
- If you wish to be added to our regular email list, send your email address to [nmaguire@svnh.ca](mailto:nmaguire@svnh.ca)