

October 26, 2021



Good afternoon,

After a long month, I am pleased to say that public health has declared the COVID-19 outbreak at Saint Vincent's Nursing Home over.

Effective immediately, any restrictions related to the outbreak are no longer in effect.

Residents are once again able to do the following:

- Move freely within the building (no longer cohorted to their units).
- Participate in community events and activities.
- Visit restaurants and public places.
- Use our outside space and enjoy the garden.
- Go on drives and visit in private homes of a family, friend or a Designated Caregiver. Overnight visits are permitted only if the visit is outside of the central zone.

Residents may not leave the facility with support persons who are not fully vaccinated. Residents may travel within Atlantic Canada only.

Designated caregivers & visitors:

- Now able to move freely on the unit including the dining room.
 - Please keep our limited space in mind. There may not be room for additional people during meals or an activity.
 - Masks remain mandatory.

For visitors:

- Visitors are able to return to Saint Vincent's for visits with their loved one.
- All visitors must be fully vaccinated and show proof of vaccination along with a photo ID.
- Please maintain social distance as much as possible.

For employees:

- Employees working on the third floor can wear masks only. Face shields are no longer required.
- Employees working on the third floor can leave the unit during their shift.

All gathering limits in Saint Vincent's Nursing Home have now been removed. **Masks must still be worn both inside and when visiting outside.**

This has been an extremely difficult time but, despite the positive cases, we know our efforts are working. We recently had a meeting with Dr. Lynn Johnson with Infection Prevention and Control Nova Scotia. Her message on our outbreak response was very positive. She was very impressed with how the outbreak was handled by the employees, especially the employees on the third floor. She pointed out that COVID-19 was present in the building for several days prior to being detected yet it did not spread throughout the facility. She shared that this was a testament to all of you for getting vaccinated, using proper hand hygiene, maintaining distance, using personal protective equipment properly, and following restrictions.

There are many people to thank, and we will celebrate the cumulative effort, together, as soon as we can. Until then, I offer thanks to our wonderful internal team at Saint Vincent's who were professional and did whatever was needed on the third floor and throughout the facility in all departments. This includes the management team who were great at keeping the day-to-day operations going, for working where needed, and being available day and night as necessary. In addition, there were many outside entities who helped to keep a watchful eye over our processes and were present in the background for support and guidance, including the coordinated efforts of the Continuing Care Response Team at the Nova Scotia Health Authority and the Department of Health and Wellness, the Infectious Disease Prevention and Management Team with Occupational Health and Safety, the Infection Prevention and Control Specialists, and the Microbiology Laboratory. We were in daily contact with these professionals who offered strategies, expertise, support, and reassurance.

And, lastly, there are two people who were instrumental in our success: Debbie Coombs, our Infection Control Designate and Ken Rehman, our Director of Resident Care. Although they are quick to push credit to the employees and all the other people involved, they were truly stellar in providing support, sharing information and overall, keeping things contained and on track.

It was a team effort in so many ways with all of you playing a part.

As we move forward, I know that because of the work done together, by so many, we will continue to handle whatever COVID brings to us.

With appreciation,

Angela Berrette
Executive Director