

MISSING RESIDENT EMERGENCY PLAN — CODE YELLOW

Purpose

The policy provides guidelines for staff, students and volunteers on how to respond quickly and efficiently if a resident is deemed to be missing.

DEFINITIONS

CODE YELLOW

A term used to alert staff that a resident is (or is presumed to be) missing

Emergency

An urgent or pressing situation or condition presenting an imminent threat to the health or well-being of residents and others attending the home that requires immediate action to ensure the safety of persons in the home

Staff

A person who works at the Home either:

- (a) As an employee of the Region/Home. This includes unionized staff, including but not limited to CUPE 905 Long-Term Care Bargaining Unit Staff (excluding Seniors Community Program Staff), and Non-Union staff working in the Homes. This also includes any redeployed Regional staff
- (b) Has a contract or agreement with Region/Home. This includes but not limited to the Medical Director, Registered Dietician, Physician, Pharmacy Service Provider, Physiotherapist, etc.
- (c) At the Home due to a contract or agreement between the Region/Home and an employment agency or other third party. This includes agency staff (including those who may not provide direct care to residents)

PARAMEDIC AND SENIORS SERVICES

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Policy

The key requirements of this policy are:

1. Activation: *Missing Resident Emergency Plan – CODE YELLOW* MUST be activated by the Charge Nurse for any resident who cannot be found after an initial search is complete
2. Duty to support: All staff have a duty to support and respond to a CODE YELLOW
3. Equipment and Supplies: The Homes will ensure staff have access to resources, supplies, personal protective equipment, and equipment to adequately respond to a CODE YELLOW
4. Communications: The Homes will be equipped with an effective public address system for announcing CODE YELLOW to those in the Home
5. Reporting: The Home has a duty to report to the Ministry of Long-Term Care:
 - Immediately, a resident who is missing for three or more hours or any missing resident who returns to the home with an injury or any adverse change in condition regardless of the length of time the resident was missing, and/or
 - No later than one business day after the resident went missing, any resident who is missing for less than three hours and who returns to the home with no injury or adverse change in condition
6. Education and Training: All staff, students and volunteers will receive orientation training and annual retraining on emergency and evacuation procedures

Procedures

This section contains procedures for the following:

- A. Activating and responding to a CODE YELLOW
- B. During a CODE YELLOW
- C. Ending a CODE YELLOW
- D. Post CODE YELLOW Procedures and Documentation

A. ACTIVATING AND RESPONDING TO A CODE YELLOW

The staff member who first notices a resident is missing will conduct an initial search:

- Check the resident's room and/or frequently visited areas
- Call the resident's cell phone if they have one
- Contact reception (during business hours), check the sign-out sheet, and determine if the resident is away on absence

- Check with other staff, volunteers and residents
- Identify if the resident is wearing a wander alert badge
- Contact the Charge Nurse (or designate) to confirm an initial search has not located a missing resident

Notes: Students and volunteers who notice a resident is missing should contact a Charge Nurse immediately.

The Charge Nurse (or delegate) will:

- Assess the situation and get a verbal report from the staff member, student, or volunteer who became aware the resident was missing
- Assume command of the emergency
- Delegate a staff member to announce the following statement three times using the public address system: “CODE YELLOW (Missing Resident on [Home Area]). All available staff, please report to the Nurses Station”
- Request the Administrator (or designate) to access and review any surveillance camera footage (CCTV) at the Home
- Call the SDM, if applicable, to tell them about the situation and ask if they (or another visitor) may have taken the resident as part of an unscheduled outing

B. DURING A CODE YELLOW

The Charge Nurse (or designate) will:

- Initiate the first systematic search of the whole Home (including outside)
Note: The Charge Nurse is the search coordinator.
- Call “8-911” and contact the police once either:
 - The first systematic search of the whole Home is complete **OR**
 - As soon as possible based on other considerations (such as whether it is known or presumed the resident has left the property, the resident’s cognitive, physical or psychosocial condition, the time of day, weather conditions and the resident’s knowledge of the area)

Note: Provide the 911 operator with as much detail as possible.
- Delegate a staff member to:
 - Wait for the Police at the entrance to the Home and escort them to the Nurse’s Station

Note: Once the Police arrive on site, the Charge Nurse (or designate) and Police will coordinate search strategies and next steps.

- Obtain search materials from the Nurses' Station
- Complete and maintain search records
- Notify the Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours), the Director of Care, the resident's most responsible Physician and the Medical Director
- Update the SDM, if applicable, to tell them about the situation

The Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours) will:

- Inform and consult with the Director, Seniors Services on whether to activate the Incident Management System (IMS)

C. ENDING A CODE YELLOW

The Charge Nurse (or designate) will:

- Declare the CODE YELLOW over when the resident is found, and their identity confirmed or at the direction of the Police
- If the resident is found alive, follow Procedure C in *Appendix A*. If the resident is found unresponsive, follow Procedure D in *Appendix A*
- Delegate a staff member to announce the following statement three times over the public address system: "CODE YELLOW. All clear"

Note: Once a CODE YELLOW has been declared over, normal operations resume.

D. POST CODE YELLOW PROCEDURES AND DOCUMENTATION

The Charge Nurse (or designate) will:

- Ensure all emergency response equipment is replenished and cleaned
- Report any incidents/injuries using the appropriate tools. See Incident Reporting at the Homes
- Conduct debrief(s) and other actions as required by the *Long-Term Care Emergency Recovery Plan*
- Update the Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours), the Director of Care, the resident's most responsible Physician and the Medical Director

The Director of Care (or designate) will:

- Report the missing person incident to the Ministry, following the *Mandatory and Critical*

Incident Reporting Policy and Procedures

- Notify Joint Health and Safety Committee regarding all incidents involving staff, volunteers, visitors, and contract workers

The Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours) will:

- In consultation with the Director of Seniors Services:
 - Deactivate the Incident Management System (IMS), if activated
 - Notify the Wellbeing Team to ensure staff supports in place for those who experienced distress

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff, students and volunteers

- Support a search for the missing resident, as required

Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours)

- Access CCTV footage, as required
- Following consultation with the Director of Seniors Services, activate and/or deactivate the Incident Management System (IMS)

Director of Care (or designate)

- Initiate Mandatory Critical Incident System (CIS) Report

Charge Nurse (or designate)

- Assume command of a CODE YELLOW
- Coordinate search strategies with the Police
- Maintain and complete missing resident search documentation, as required

Emergency Management Specialist

- Provide education and training on Emergency Plans
- Complete After-Action Review (AAR) as required by the *Long-Term Care Emergency Recovery Plan*

Seniors Services Education Team

- Maintain staff records of education and training

AUTHORITY

Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021; General Regulation 246/22; Accreditation Standards Manual, as current; and York Region Seniors Services Administration

Alternate formats or communications supports are available upon request by contacting newmarkethealthcentre@york.ca or maplehealthcentre@york.ca.