

Updated COVID-19 Information for Long Term Care and Retirement Homes

Update to York Region Long-Term Care and Retirement Homes as of April 16, 2020

As a follow-up to our message sent April 10, 2020, this message provides our Long-Term Care and Retirement Home (LTCH/RH) partners with additional information on:

- [COVID-19 Action Plan Protecting Long-Term Care Homes](#)
- LTC staff restricted to working only in one home or health care setting
- Temporary pause on transitioning hospital patients to LTCH/RH
- New guidance document on mask use
- LTC guidance document updates to align with Action Plan
- New signage available for health care settings

COVID-19 Action Plan Protecting Long Term Care Homes

- This [Action Plan](#) provides an overview of actions taken to date in the fight against COVID-19 and addresses the new measures being taken to prevent further outbreaks and deaths from COVID-19 in our LTCH/RH.
- Actions to date included the Chief Medical Officer of Health issuing an updated Directive #3 for LTCH/RHs. This was communicated to LTCH/RH on April 16, 2020.
- New actions set in place include more aggressive testing, screening and surveillance in LTCH/RHs, introducing further risk assessments and mobilizing support teams from across the health sector and enhanced guidance on PPE usage and prioritizing distribution to LTCH/RH in need.

Limiting Long-Term Care Staff to Working in Only One Location

- On April 14, 2020, the Province announced that it would be introducing further measures to assist in the protection of Long Term Care Homes, specifically directed at staffing.
- This was accomplished by order, issued under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* and has been documented under [O. Reg. 146/20, Limiting Work to a Single Long-Term Care Home](#). The order will be in effect until it is revoked. The Province also amended previous order O. Reg. 77/20 (by way of O. Reg. 147/20) to reflect that employees are to be redeployed in a manner that they are not providing services for more than one LTC home and otherwise complying with the new order.
- Order requirements include:
 - First, as soon as possible and no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday April 17, 2020 any person who works as an employee of a long term care provider **and** as an employee of any other health service provider or retirement home shall inform each of the employers that they are subject to this Order.
 - Second, beginning at 12:01 a.m. on Wednesday, April 22, 2020, an employee of a long-term care provider who works in a LTCH operated or maintained by the long-term care provider shall not also work:
 - (a) in another LTCH operated or maintained by the long-term care provider;
 - (b) as an employee of any other health service provider; or
 - (c) as an employee of a RH.
 - The order does not prevent employees working in LTCH from working for other, non-health service provider employers.
 - Employees cannot be terminated for choosing one employer over another in order to comply.
 - This order also applies to non-registered staff.



- Order requirements for LTCH employers:
 - The employer must comply by ensuring that by 12:01 a.m. on Wednesday, April 22, 2020, any employee who works in a LTCH it operates or maintains is not also working:
 - (a) in another long-term care home operated or maintained by the long-term care provider;
 - (b) as an employee of any other health service provider; or
 - (c) as an employee of a RH.
 - The order must be posted in a conspicuous place.
- LTCH staff capacity will be supplemented by redeploying health care workers from other areas in the health sector and utilizing the Government of Ontario's [job matching portal](#) to identify available resources for homes experiencing shortages.

Temporary Pause on Transitioning Hospital Patients to LTCH/RHs

- Ontario hospitals have been asked to temporarily stop transferring patients to LTCH/RHs.
- Hospital acute care capacity across Ontario is at 64% as of April 13, 2020 and can continue to care for these patients safely given the risk of COVID-19 in LTC/RH settings at this time.
- This does not prohibit hospitals from discharging other designated ALC patients to appropriate/safe destinations.

New Guidance Document on Mask Use

- The Guidance for Mask Use in LTCH/RHs document (attached) outlines who should be masked, how masks help to keep LTCH/RHs safe during a pandemic, the recommended implementation approach, when a mask should be changed and the importance of conservation of supplies.

LTC Guidance Document Updates to Align with COVID-19 Action Plan

- The Ministry of Health's COVID-19 Guidance Document for Long Term Care Homes has been updated to reflect the COVID-19 Action Plan deliverables including more rigorous screening and testing measures and proper mask use guidance being implemented within long term care homes.

New Signage Available for Health Care Settings

- Signage is now available in French and English to alert patients and visitors in health care settings of
 - http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/2019_guidance.aspx

For More Information

Call our dedicated health professional COVID-19 line at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 77280 (8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week, after hours call 905-953-6478). Continue to visit york.ca/healthprofessionals, york.ca/covid19 and Ontario.ca/covid19 for up to date information on COVID-19.