

COVID-19

Long Term Care Resident Visitation Principles

Latest updates are included in **BLUE** and listed in the Change Tracker on the final page.

Purpose

To minimize the risk of COVID-19 outbreaks in Long Term Care (LTC) facilities while:

- Supporting the residents' needs to have regular communication and visitation with close family and/or friends
- Supporting residents needs to have care from family care givers who are essential partners in care
- Emphasizing a resident and family centered approach, focused on flexibility and compassion
- Considering needs of residents whose health and wellbeing is at higher risk without the presence of family caregivers

This guideline supports the role and importance of:

- **“Designated family caregivers”** - any person whom the resident and/or substitute decision maker identifies and designates as their family caregiver. As essential partners in care, these individuals actively and regularly participate in providing care and may support feeding, mobility, personal hygiene, cognitive stimulation, communication, meaningful connection, relational continuity, and assistance in decision-making
- **“General visitor”** - family and friends who visit for social reasons
- **“Essential Service Provider”** - individuals providing essential support services as determined by the care team (e.g. Spiritual Care, OT/PT, SLP).
- **“Non-Essential Service Provider”** - individuals providing support services that are not deemed essential and can be shut down during pandemic, e.g. hairdressers.
- **“Volunteers”** – individuals who are registered and trained at the site are not considered visitors and are strongly encouraged to be involved with facilitating visitations.

Definition

“Fully Vaccinated Manitoban/Individual”

Fully vaccinated individuals are those who have received both doses (any combination) of an approved two dose COVID-19 vaccine (AstraZeneca, Pfizer, Moderna), OR a single dose of an approved single dose COVID-19 vaccine (Janssen/Johnson & Johnson) with more than 14 days having passed since the second dose (or approved sole dose) was received.

Where vaccination status is a factor in consideration of expanded visitation, proof of immunization will be required.

Principles

This document is not intended to be prescriptive and does not replace clinical and operational judgement of staff and leaders of the LTC facilities when making plans and decisions to support visitations in relation to staffing, space and infrastructure.

LTC operators actively support the ability of residents to remain connected with their loved ones during COVID-19

- Operators proactively and collaboratively work with the residents/designates to identify “**designated family caregiver(s)**”. Sites may consider providing them with some identification such as badge or sticker
- Residents/ designates may identify **general visitors** who wish to visit for social reasons.
- Sites are to determine overall number of visitors at one time
- Operators identify and implement creative solutions to facilitate and actively support **virtual visits** (e.g., video call on cell phones or tablets) as an alternative means for residents to connect with their families and friends where possible.

Visitor limitations are directly related to the presence/transmission of COVID-19 in the province as determined by Chief Provincial Public Health Officer. Visitor limitations will change as the level of COVID-19 activity changes and are detailed in the Appendix.

In collaboration with IP&C/designate and Public Health, LTC Operators will determine the need to suspend all visits in the case of a confirmed/potential COVID-19 outbreak in the facility or local area or upon the direction of the Chief Provincial Public Health Officer. Resumption of visits will also be collaboratively determined.

LTC Operators implement infection prevention and control preventative measures and protocols as outlined in the [Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Personal Care Homes](#). These measures include but are not limited to active screening; hand hygiene; physical distancing; PPE education; PPE use.

- Brief hugs and short periods of handholding is permitted while maintaining as much distance as possible between the faces of the resident and visitor and ensuring the availability of alcohol-based hand rub for prompt and effective hand hygiene both immediately before and after these encounters
- Visiting family members from the same household and/or bubble do not have to physically distance from one another.
- Designated Family Caregivers or visitors may not eat or drink together at the same time with the resident. If visitors or designated family care givers are eating or drinking while at the facility, they maintain a physical distance of six feet/two meters. Remove mask carefully, including appropriate hand hygiene. After eating or drinking, perform hand

hygiene and don mask. Physical distancing of six feet, two meters must be maintained at any time PPE is removed.

- Designated Family Caregivers and General Visitors go directly to the planned visiting space without prolonged interaction with others.

Operators provide options to accommodate varied circumstances of residents and families, considering the following:

- **Designated Family Caregivers** must be fully vaccinated. They should have flexibility to visit anytime and for any length of time during specified visitation hours and /or as determined with the care team. Designated Family Caregivers should have reasonable access to both indoor and outdoor areas.
- **General Visitors'** visits are scheduled by appointment in an appropriate and equitable process as outlined by the operator
 - General visits occur in the designated visiting spaces, which may be outdoors, indoors in the resident room, or indoors in the all-season shelter/designated indoor visitation room.
 - Space in the room must allow for physical distancing to be maintained between the resident and the general visitor(s). Physical distancing must be maintained if space allows for more than one visitor.
 - Facilities can determine the maximum number of visitors to the facility at one time and/or per day, and/or per resident per day.
- Facilities may determine the level of supervision required for visits in order to ensure physical distancing and other requirements are followed. This may include requiring resident doors to remain open during visits. This is at the discretion of the facility.
- When a resident is Orange (COVID-19 suspect) or Red (COVID-19 positive), operators refer to the Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Personal Care Homes for visitation guidance

Immunization Status and Visitation: [When the general visitors are fully immunized](#), operators will expand visitation in accordance with following:

- Proof of General Visitor vaccination status will be requested and confirmed by photo identification;
- General visitors must provide proof of vaccination;
- Documentation may vary according to the facility and individual visitor, however may include:
 - Confirmation via QR code
 - Manitoba immunization card;
 - Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination
- Individual sites will determine ability to operationalize each of the above and will communicate to resident families;
- Facilities will confirm the identity of general visitors by requesting photo identification to match the name on the immunization record;
- Information related to visitors (but not vaccination status) will be retained for 30 days for the purpose of contact tracing.

Residents and Mask wearing: Residents are to wear a medical mask as outlined, with the following exceptions for those who are medically unable to wear a mask:

- Residents with significant respiratory disease where the mask results in increased dyspnea or oxygenation issues;
- Facial injuries/infections that would preclude effective wearing of a mask;
- Residents who are non-compliant (e.g., those for whom the provider would have to repeatedly and frequently provide a new mask due to the resident removing and/or discarding it);
- Residents who are unable to put on – or remove - their own mask;
- Residents whose reactive behaviors may escalate as a result of wearing a mask.

Problem Solving & Appeal Process: All operators must have a rapid problem solving and appeal process to ensure residents and families concerns related to visitation are addressed in timely manner.

End of Life: Operators use compassion and judgement in determining visitation and expanded visitation at End of Life, considering the following:

- When a loved one is dying, the ability to present is often an important time for both the dying individual and for their visitor. The significance of this access needs to be balanced with the risk of infection for the visitor, the staff and other residents.
- Additional IP&C measures that may be required to support the visitation
- In determining the status of allowed visitors, consideration is given to the stage of illness, projection regarding timing of death (e.g., those who's condition may be stable but who are at high risk of deterioration) and trajectory of expected decline, which can often be monitored by observing the rate of decline in performance status. The Palliative Performance Score may be helpful in monitoring decline; it is not so much the resident's performance status as their momentum of decline that indicates the approaching end of life. The decision related to when an individual is approaching their end of life will be informed by the care team and is unique to the circumstances of each individual. While difficult to be precise around when an individual is at end of life, this generally refers to the last four weeks of life.
- When considering exceptions to these guidelines, vaccination status of visitors should be considered. Of note, fully immunized individuals (those who have received both doses of the Covid-19 vaccine, and whose second dose was more than 14 days ago) who are asymptomatic have the lowest risk of acquiring and passing on a Covid illness.

Hairdressers: Hairdressers must be fully vaccinated and are permitted as long as the site is not in outbreak and compliance with Public Health occupancy/limits and physical distancing requirements is ensured.

References/ Adapted from:

Finding the Right Balance: An Evidence-Informed Guidance Document to Support the Re-Opening of Canadian Long-Term Care Homes to Family Caregivers and Visitors during the COVID-19 Pandemic

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5c2fa7b03917eed9b5a436d8/t/5f0f2678f205304ab1e695be/1594828410565/%27NIA+LTC+Visitor+Guidance+Document.pdf>

Better Together: Re-Integration of Family Caregivers as Essential Partners in Care in a Time of COVID-19

https://www.cfhi-fcass.ca/docs/default-source/itr/tools-and-resources/bt-re-integration-of-family-caregivers-as-essential-partners-covid-19-e.pdf?sfvrsn=5b3d8f3d_2

Appendix – Visitor Restrictions (Personal Care Homes)

LTC Type of Visit	Visitors Recommended/Limited	Precautions/Restrictions
Essential Service Providers (e.g., Spiritual Care, OT/PT, SLP)	<p>Only those services for client as determined by care team.</p> <p>Minimize external healthcare professionals.</p>	<p>Sign In and Out</p> <p>Screening Before Entry</p> <p>Appropriate PPE for the setting/situation</p> <p>Hand Hygiene and PH/IPC guidance.</p>
Non-essential Services (e.g., hairdresser)	<p>Hairdresser permitted provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - they are fully vaccinated. - the site is not in outbreak. - they are not operating a public business in the PCH - they work in a single PCH (or allow for 14 days between 2 PCHs) 	<p>Screening before entry</p> <p>Required to wear a medical mask and eye protection that they provide.</p> <p>The resident, if able to tolerate, will be required to wear a medical mask. Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting before and after each resident hair care appointment.</p> <p>Resident escorted by unit staff to and from the appointment.</p>
End of Life (Indoor visit) – Last four weeks of life	<p>Designated family caregiver(s) - Up to Four (4) may be identified by resident/ delegate but only two (2) may visit at a time and for any length of time during specific visitation hours and/ or as determined with the care team if physical distancing can be maintained.</p> <p>In addition and at the same time: A reasonable number of general visitors, regardless of vaccination status, provided physical distancing can be maintained.</p>	<p>By appointment for general visitors</p> <p>Sign In and Out</p> <p>Screening Before Entry</p> <p>Designated family caregivers: medical mask and eye protection (or additional PPE according to Additional Precautions)</p> <p>Visitors: medical mask (or additional PPE according to Additional Precautions)</p> <p>Hand Hygiene and PH/IP&C guidance</p> <p>General visitors escorted to/from visitation room, minimize touch surfaces</p> <p>Visitors will keep medical masks on for the duration of the visit</p> <p>Visitor must maintain physical distancing of two meters from staff and resident. If physical distancing from the resident cannot be maintained for the duration the visitor is present, the resident should be managed within orange zone protocol. After the visitor leaves, the resident, may be treated as a green zone resident.</p>

LTC Type of Visit	Visitors Recommended/Limited	Precautions/Restrictions
<p>Designated Family Caregivers (must be fully vaccinated)</p>	<p>Designated family caregiver(s) may visit anytime and for any length of time during specific visitation hours and/or as determined with the care team.</p> <p>Up to Two may be identified by resident/ delegate but one (1) may attend at a time in the resident's room.</p> <p>Visiting outdoors, or in an outdoor all-season shelter or designated indoor visitation room (where visitors can easily access the space from outside the personal care home and maintain the same public health requirements as the outdoor shelters) is acceptable.</p>	<p>Sign In and Out Screening Before Entry Medical mask and eye protection (or additional PPE according to Additional Precautions) Hand Hygiene and PH/IPC guidance</p>
<p>General Visitors (indoor/ outdoor)</p>	<p>Indoors: Two (2) vaccinated general visitors can visit, provided physical distancing can be maintained.</p> <p>All-Season Visitation Shelter/Designated Indoor Visitation Room: One (1) general visitor (vaccinated or unvaccinated) can visit.</p> <p>Outdoors: Four (4) general visitors (vaccinated or unvaccinated) may visit, provided physical distancing can be maintained</p>	<p>Visits by pre-arranged appointment only Sign In and Out Screening Before Entry Medical mask indoors and outdoors Resident wears a medical mask for the entire visit, including outdoor visits. Hand Hygiene and PH/IPC guidance Must maintain the 6 feet/ 2 meter separation at all times.</p>

Change Tracker

February 16, 2022

1. Expanded access for fully vaccinated general visitors; expanded access for unvaccinated general visitors in visitation shelters or designated visitation room; outdoor visits (weather permitting) (pg 3, 6, 7)
2. Removed direction regarding out of province visitors.

January 21, 2022

1. Updated the guidance related to eating/drinking for general visitors and Designated family caregivers.

December 29, 2021

1. Updated the language in the Principles section of document related to Pandemic Response Levels. Updated the Appendix accordingly.
2. Updated direction for visiting: No general visitors; hairdressers required to be vaccinated.
3. Updated language to refer to medical mask and not specify level of medical mask
4. Removed direction for blow drying (added to PCH IP&C Guidelines).

Nov 24, 2021

1. Updated direction for visitation when a resident is Orange (COVID-19 suspect) or Red (COVID-19 positive) (pg 3)
2. Added the Canadian COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination to the list of acceptable options (pg 4)
3. Updated the Pandemic Response Level Red Appendix title to refer to a high level of COVID-19 activity (pg 6)

Nov 15, 2021

1. Updated requirement for designated family caregivers to be fully vaccinated (pg. 3)
2. Updated examples of acceptable proof of vaccination status (pg. 3)

Nov. 3, 2021

1. Updated direction for out of province visitors (pg. 5)

Oct. 5, 2021

1. Updated language from procedure to medical mask (pgs. 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)
2. Provided direction for unvaccinated residents that are COVID-recovered within the past 180 days. (pgs. 3, 7, 8, 10, 11)

3. Updated language to support brief handholding, hugs, walks outside. (pgs. 2, 3, 12)
4. Updated language in Principles section of document and language related to Pandemic Response Level Yellow in Principles section and the Appendix. (pgs. 2, 9)
5. Updated language to support Designated Family Caregivers and General Visitors going directly to the go directly to the planned visiting space (pg. 3)

July 26, 2021

1. Updated guidance regarding fully vaccinated hairdressers working in more than one PCH during Pandemic Response Level Orange and/or Yellow. (pg. 9, 12)

June 28, 2021

1. Updated to support eating/drinking by general visitors.

June 18, 2021

1. Definition of fully vaccinated Manitoban/individual (pg. 1)
2. Updated to support expanded visitation for fully vaccinated residents and their fully vaccinated visitors. Specific guidance added for screening, information records, and confirmation of vaccination documentation (pgs. 2,3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14)
3. Updated end of life information, including language to increase the consideration of end of life timeframe from 2 weeks to 4 weeks and increasing the number of designated family caregivers at this time. (pg. 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12)
4. Streamlined the document to remove duplicate information.

April 16, 2021

1. Clarified requirements around blow-drying activities for hairdressers (pg. 5)

April 6, 2021

1. Clarification on types of masks visitors and residents need to wear (pgs. 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)
2. In Red - two general visitors may visit if meeting outdoors (page 8)
3. In Orange – two general visitors can visit indoors (pgs. 10)

February 17, 2021

1. Hairdresser now permitted under levels red and orange, with precautions and as long as the site is not in outbreak (pgs. 5, 7, 9 and 12).

February 2, 2021

1. Updated Red (Critical) General Visitor mask requirement and Resident mask recommendation (pgs. 4 and 5).

2. Updated Out of Province Visitation Guidelines during Pandemic Response Level Red and Orange (pg. 5).

January 18, 2021

1. Clarified wording around general visitors (pgs. 2 and 4).
2. Added visitors must wear a non-medical mask in levels yellow and orange, and a procedure mask in level red (pgs. 2, 4, and 6).

January 6, 2021

1. Updated guidance related to general visitation permitted during Pandemic Restriction Level Red. **One** (1) general visitor permitted to visit at a time. All visits must occur in the all-season visitation shelter/designated indoor visitation room.
2. General visitors are not permitted in the resident room, with the exception for those visits permitted for end of life.

December 19, 2020

1. Changes to required personal protective equipment to be worn by designated family caregivers.
 - a. Facility to provide procedure mask and eye protection and to instruct designated family caregivers on appropriate wearing and use as well as ongoing importance of proper hand hygiene.
 - b. If eating or drinking while in the facility, designated family caregivers are reminded to maintain a physical distance of six feet/two meters. Remove PPE carefully, including appropriate hand hygiene. After eating or drinking, perform hand hygiene and don mask and eye protection

Nov. 26, 2020

1. Changes to visitor precautions (pgs. 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)
 - Visitors must follow regarding the need for visitors to wear a mask at all times during their visit.
 - General visitors are not permitted to eat or drink while in the facility
 - Designated Family Care Givers must maintain physical distance of six feet/two metres if eating or drinking while in the facility, and must follow appropriate hand hygiene when donning and doffing PPE
 - Masks are required while in visitation shelters

Nov. 1, 2020

1. General Visitors – Outdoors – Updated to include general visitor information for facilities located in geographic regions designated Orange (Restricted). (pg. 9)

Oct. 14, 2020

1. Update – where outbreaks require the suspension of visits, resumption of visits will be collaboratively determined with Public Health. (pg. 2)
2. Consideration for Indoor Visits – added consideration for residents without family to designate as family caregivers. (pg. 3)
3. All-season visitation shelters and designated indoor visitation rooms – guidance added. (pg. 4).
 - a. All season shelter/designated indoor visitation guidelines added to Appendix Charts and throughout document.
4. Non-essential service visits – updated in Red (Critical) and Orange (Restricted) to not permitted.