

# Essential Caregivers in LTC

During COVID-19

Version 2: Updated September 8, 2020



Thrive Group

Please continue to visit [www.thrivegroup.ca](http://www.thrivegroup.ca) for updates on COVID-19 and visiting guidelines.

As visiting guidelines continue to be adjusted as the pandemic evolves, the guidelines for “Essential Caregivers” have been modified. Essential Caregivers are visitors designated by the resident and/or substitute decision maker (SDM). As essential partners in care, they can support feeding, mobility, personal hygiene, cognitive stimulation, communication, meaningful connection, relational continuity, and assistance in decision making. A maximum of two caregivers may be identified for each resident and they may visit together or separately. Caregivers must be at least 18 years of age. Residents/SDMs are asked to identify any essential caregivers to the home to make arrangements, visiting schedules and planning for care delivery. Any changes to designated essential caregivers must be communicated with the home in advance of visiting. As always—the health, safety and wellbeing of our residents/clients, staff and visitors is our top priority. We will continue to modify our precautions based on the most current directives. To balance the risks of having additional people in our homes, all caregivers must adhere to the following practices.

**Non-adherence to these rules may result in visits being discontinued.**

- **Scheduling**—You are asked to identify a visiting schedule or routine with the home
- **Visiting Policy**—You will be required to review the Homes’ visiting policy at least monthly
- **Education and Attestations**—You are required to review educational materials on the required infection control precautions provided by the home (video or hard copy) before your first visit, and must attest that you have reviewed and understood the materials. You will also be required to attest that you have not visited anyone in self-isolation or another home that is in outbreak.
- **Self-Screening**—Please self-screen before arriving at the home using the attached Self-Screening Form. If you answer yes to any of the questions do not visit and contact the home as soon as possible to discuss your situation and determine next steps. **IF YOU ARE ILL—PLEASE DO NOT VISIT.**
- **Active Screening**— You will be required to pass an active screening questionnaire and have your temperature checked by home staff upon arrival and again at departure.
- **ID Badges**—A list will be maintained of all approved essential caregivers. Approved caregivers will receive a badge which will be worn for the visits and returned at the end of your visit.
- **COVID-19 Testing** -Prior to your first visit, you will be required to attest that you have tested negative for COVID-19 within the previous 2 weeks and subsequently every 2 weeks going forward.
- **Masks**—Please wear your own mask to our home. You will be provided with a surgical mask upon your arrival that must be worn for the entire visit.
- **Hand Hygiene**—You will be required to sanitize your hands before entering the home, frequently during your visit and when exiting the home.
- **Physical Distancing**—You are required to maintain a 2 meter/6 foot physical distance from all others during your visit. This does not include the resident you are visiting.
- **Limiting Movement in the Home**—You will be required to limit where you travel throughout the home. Please stay within the room of the resident you are visiting as much as possible and follow the directions of the staff regarding where you may and may not travel within the home. Staff will advise which restrooms are for caregivers.

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- **Personal Items**—Please limit the quantity and size of personal items you bring into the home such as bags, etc. If you would like to bring any parcels, items or other goods for your loved one, please make arrangements prior to your visit. Non-perishable food items will only be accepted if delivered in their original packaging. These will continue to be held for 72 hours.
- **Outbreaks**—Should the home declare an outbreak, we will be taking direction from Hamilton Public Health provincial authorities to determine our approach to visiting restrictions.

## SELF-SCREENING

1. Do you have a fever (temperature of 37.8C or greater)?  Yes  No
2. Are you experiencing ANY of the following symptoms?  Yes  No
  - New or worsening cough  Yes  No
  - Shortness of breath  Yes  No
  - Sore throat  Yes  No
  - Runny nose or sneezing  Yes  No
  - Nasal congestion  Yes  No
  - Difficulty swallowing  Yes  No
  - New smell or taste disorder(s)  Yes  No
  - Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain  Yes  No
  - Unexplained fatigue/malaise  Yes  No
  - Chills  Yes  No
  - Headache  Yes  No
3. Have you travelled outside of Canada or had close contact with anyone that has travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days?  Yes  No
4. Have you had close contact with anyone with respiratory illness or a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19?  Yes  No

**If you answered "yes" to any of the above questions, please do not come to the home.**

### COVID-19 TESTING FOR ESSENTIAL CAREGIVERS

You will not be permitted to visit unless you test negative. To obtain a test, please reach out to your local Public Health Unit at the number below—they will arrange for testing.

**Public Health Units**

Hamilton: (905) 974-9848 ext.2

Burlington: Dial 311