

MESSAGE TO LONG-TERM CARE HOMES, RETIREMENT HOMES AND RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES –2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID -19)

Attention: Directors of Care, Healthcare Managers and Home Operators

Hamilton Public Health Leadership under the direction of Dr. Elizabeth Richardson and other community partners, has endorsed the implementation of further public health measures in alignment with the Directive # 3 for congregate living settings. Please see the relevant changes below for each of your respective facilities.

Long-Term Care Facilities:

Review and ensure full compliance with all requirement in the updated Directive # 3 issued October 14, 2020. Given our worsening COVID -19 epidemiology, we are urging special emphasis:

- (i) to ensure that active screening of staff, visitors and residents occurs consistently as described in the updated Directive # 3;
- (ii) that appropriate and consistent use of universal masking and PPE be ensured;
- (iii) that short-term absences as described in Directive # 3 be restricted to the greatest extent possible, as they continue to present a material risk of importation of infection into the facility; and
- (iv) that the number and frequency of essential visitors be restricted as much as possible and that careful attention is directed at their purposes, screening and use of PPE.

Retirement Homes:

We strongly urge that the requirements of the updated Directive # 3 be reviewed and implemented to the greatest extent possible. Although the short-term and temporary absence requirements in Directive # 3 are not meant to apply to retirement homes,

- (i) we strongly urge that such absences be restricted to the greatest extent possible,
- (ii) as noted above for long-term care facilities, the number and frequency of essential visitors be restricted as much as possible and that careful attention is directed at their purposes, screening and use of PPE.

Residential Care Facilities

We strongly urge that COVID-19 prevention and response practices and policies are actively carried out, with an emphasis that:

- (i) active staff/resident and visitor screening be re-instituted/continued;
- (ii) careful and consistent attention be directed at universal masking and appropriate PPE use;
- (iii) resident absences for reasons other than medical appointments be restricted or prohibited; and
- (iv) the number and frequency of essential visitors be restricted as much as possible and that careful attention is directed at their purposes, screening and use of PPE.

Hamilton Public Health Services will continue to provide updates as new information becomes available via the City of Hamilton's website. If you have any questions, please contact Public Health Services by calling (905) 974-9878 option 4 and ask to speak to a Public Health Inspector.

Sincerely,



Michelle Baird, Director

Epidemiology Wellness & Communicable Disease Control
Public Health Services—Safe & Healthy Communities