

Resident Absences in LTC

During COVID-19

Version 1: August 31, 2020



Thrive Group

Please continue to visit www.thrivegroup.ca for updates on COVID-19 and visiting guidelines.

On August 28, 2020 the Ministry of Health (MOH) communicated changes to restrictions related to LTC resident absences from the home. Resident absences fall into 2 different categories:

- **Short Stay absences** are for health care related, social or other reasons and do not include an overnight stay, with the exception of single-night emergency room visits. These visits **will not** require testing or an isolation period upon the resident's return to the home.

When planning to take your loved one out for a short stay absence, please call the home and inform the Reception staff of the date and time of the absence. This will then be passed on to the Nursing team so that they can help your loved one to be ready for their outing. Staff will assist the residents to the front door for pick up. Anyone picking up a resident to take them out is asked to enter the home wearing a non-surgical mask and pass through the screening desk. Once screening is passed, you can meet the resident at the door and assist them out. Essential family caregivers will be permitted into the home to help their loved one get ready for the outing and assist them out of the building. Please continue to follow all current procedures for Essential Family Caregivers if this applies to you. Additional details related to short stay absences are as follows:

- ◇ Residents will be provided with a surgical mask to be worn at all times when outside of the home.
- ◇ Residents must pass COVID screening upon re-entry to the home.
- ◇ Residents will not require testing or isolation upon their return unless a risk is identified through screening or assessment.
- ◇ All residents must be signed out as per usual if they are being taken off of their unit. This is imperative for safety procedures related to fire events.
- **Temporary absences** are for personal reasons and for one or more nights. These visits **will** require the resident to self isolate for 14 days upon their return to the home and COVID testing will be completed as we would for any re-admission. Homes have been directed to review and approve all temporary absences based on a case-by-case risk assessment that encompasses the following principles:
 - ⇒ The homes ability to support self-isolation for 14 days upon the resident's return
 - ⇒ Local disease transmission and activity
 - ⇒ The risk associated with the planned activities that will be undertaken by the resident while out of the home
 - ⇒ The resident's ability to comply with local and provincial policies/bylaws
 - ⇒ Any further direction provided by the MOH

When planning to take your loved one out of the home for a temporary absence, please contact the Director of Care to discuss the arrangements that you would like to make. The Director of Care (or designate) will work with you to complete the risk assessment based on the principles above.

TEMPORARY ABSENCE RISK ASSESSMENT

Homes must review and approve all temporary absences on a case by case basis. Once the home is made aware of a request for a temporary absence, the Director of Care will contact the family/friend and ask a series of questions. We will endeavor to respond to requests for temporary absences promptly. Please provide us with 72 hrs notice should you be planning a temporary absence for your loved one to allow time for the risk assessment to be completed. The following are some examples of the questions that you can expect to be asked should you wish to take your loved one out for a temporary absence:

- Please state the purpose and location of the temporary absence such as vacation, wedding, etc.? This will include information on the residents accommodations during the absence.
- The date and time that the resident will leave and return to the home.
- What the mode of transportation is to and from the destination?
- What activities will the resident be participating in during the temporary absence?
- Please provide details if resident will be in any indoor or outdoor public settings?
- Is resident able to adhere to physical distancing requirements (e.g. avoiding crowds)?
- Will the resident be supported to wear a surgical mask when with others?
- Is resident/SDM able to ensure that they will not be staying or socializing with anyone that is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms or that has tested positive within the previous 14 days?
- How many people will be part of the residents' social circle (people you will be socializing with outside of the long-term care home) during the temporary absence?
- Will all members of the resident's social circle be wearing a mask when physical distancing cannot be maintained?
- Does the resident agree to and are they able to adhere to self-isolating for 14 days upon returning to the home?

**All non-essential visits and outings may require cancellation in the event of an outbreak.

IMPORTANT SAFETY REMINDERS FOR ABSENCES

HELP OR ENCOURAGE THE RESIDENT TO **WASH THEIR HANDS** FREQUENTLY WHILE OUT
AVOID CROWDED PUBLIC SPACES SUCH AS MOVIE THEATERS, BARS/RESTAURANTS ETC.

ASSIST THE RESIDENT TO **WEAR THEIR MASK** AT ALL TIMES, ESPECIALLY WHEN PHYSICAL
DISTANCING CANNOT BE MAINTAINED

MAINTAIN **PHYSICAL DISTANCING**

AVOID HUGGING, KISSING, HANDSHAKES ETC.

AVOID SHARING FOOD, EATING UTENSILS, CUPS AND DRINKS