

March 12, 2021

A message for our families

As we continue to follow directives and public health guidance to keep those in our Homes safe, below are details around changes to our COVID-19 testing. As previously mentioned, the Ministry of Long-Term Care Directive requires us to fully implement rapid antigen testing as of Monday, March 15.

We're happy to have rapid testing in our COVID-fighting toolkit, supporting us in keeping everyone safe with on-site results in just 15 minutes, and sincerely appreciate the patience from our families as we work toward a successful transition.

Once implemented, families will no longer need to get regular PCR tests done at an assessment centre. Moving forward, we will only use PCRs to confirm a positive rapid antigen test result or if a Home goes into outbreak.

As per the Directive, our Homes will test designated family caregivers at the same frequency as staff, students and volunteers. Those who visit their loved one three or more days in a seven-day period will be tested up to three times in that period on non-consecutive days. Those who only visit once or twice within a seven-day period will be tested each day of their visit, regardless of whether the two days are consecutive.

General visitors (when accepted) will need to complete a rapid test or provide proof of a day-of negative antigen result each time they visit. This is required for both indoor and outdoor visits (when weather permits).

We'd also like to provide an update on upcoming vaccination clinics for designated family caregivers. The provincial government recently announced that Ontario has extended the time interval of the second dose of COVID-19 vaccines up to 16 weeks, to provide more Ontarians with their first dose sooner.

We thank designated family caregivers who are waiting to receive their second dose at our Homes for their understanding. We continue to work closely with public health and will share information about new dates as soon as possible.

The trust and confidence our families place in our teams to provide their loved ones with the exceptional care and services they need and deserve has been a true bright spot for us all this past year. Please don't hesitate to reach out to the Executive Director of your specific peopleCare Home with questions at any time.