

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

This visiting policy is guided by the following principles:

**Safety** – Any approach to visiting must balance the health and safety needs of residents, staff, and visitors, and ensure risks are mitigated.

**Emotional Well-Being** – Allowing visitors is intended to support the emotional well-being of residents by reducing any potential negative impacts related to social isolation.

**Equitable Access** – All residents must be given equitable access to receive visitors, consistent with their preferences and within reasonable restrictions that safeguard residents.

**Flexibility** – The physical/infrastructure characteristics of the home, its staffing availability, whether the home is in an outbreak and the current status of the home with respect to personal protective equipment (PPE) are all variables to take into account when setting home-specific policies.

**Equality** – Residents have the right to choose their visitors. In addition, residents and/or their substitute decision-makers have the right to designate caregivers.

Visitors should consider their personal health and susceptibility to the virus in determining whether visiting a LTC home is appropriate.

A self-assessment should be completed by all visitors and if experiencing any symptoms (new or worsening) then the visitor should remain at home. Belvedere Heights will continue to provide virtual visiting opportunities for those people who are unwell and unable to visit.

## **Definitions:**

**Essential Visitors** are defined as including a person performing essential support services (e.g., food delivery, inspector, maintenance, or health care services (e.g., phlebotomy)) or a person visiting a very ill or palliative resident. Government inspectors are essential visitors under Directive #3; however, they are not subject to this policy. Essential Visitors include **Support Workers** and **Caregivers**.

Essential visitors are the only type of visitors allowed when a resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, or the home is in an outbreak. During an outbreak, and/or a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19, the local public health unit will provide direction on visitors to the home, depending on the specific situation.

**Support workers** are a type of essential visitor who is visiting to perform essential support services for the home or for a resident at the home. Examples of support workers include physicians, nurse practitioners, maintenance workers or a person delivering food, provided they are not staff of the LTC home as defined in the LTCHA

**Caregivers** are a type of essential visitor who is designated by the resident and/or their substitute decision-maker and is visiting to provide direct care to the resident (e.g., supporting feeding, mobility, personal hygiene, cognitive stimulation, communication, meaningful connection, relational continuity and assistance in decision-making).

- Caregivers must be at least 18 years of age.
- There is no limit to the number of caregivers that may be designated per resident at a time. If the home is in outbreak or resident is self-isolating or symptomatic only one caregiver may be permitted to visit at a time.

- If the home is in outbreak or the resident is self-isolating or symptomatic only one caregiver may be permitted to visit at a time.
- A caregiver may not visit any other resident or home for 10 days after visiting another resident who is self-isolating or symptomatic; and/or a home in an outbreak.
- The decision to designate an individual as a caregiver is entirely the remit of the resident and/or their substitute decision maker and not the home.
- Examples of caregivers include family members who provide meaningful connection, a privately hired caregiver or paid companions and translators.

**General Visitors** are a person who is not an essential visitor and is visiting:

a) To provide non-essential services, who may or may not be hired by the home or the resident and/or their substitute decision maker; and/or,

b) For social reasons (e.g., family members or friends) that the resident or their substitute decision-maker assess as different from direct care, including care related to cognitive stimulation, meaningful connection and relational continuity.

- A maximum of 4 general visitors or combination of general visitors and essential caregivers per resident may visit at a time, subject to direction from the local public health unit, provided:
  - The resident is not self-isolating or symptomatic; and,
  - The home is not in an outbreak; and,
- No general visitors are permitted to visit in any of the following situations:
  - The home has an outbreak.
  - The resident is self-isolating or symptomatic.

- General visitors younger than 14 years of age must be accompanied by an adult and must follow all applicable public health measures that are in place at the home (e.g. active screening, physical distancing, hand hygiene, masking for source control).
- Children under the age of 1 are not counted as a visitor, regardless of whether the visit is indoors or outdoors.

**Access to the Home:**

*Effective March 14, 2022, **all visitors** will also be required to demonstrate proof of 3 COVID vaccines to enter the home. Exemptions will only be approved for palliative, or emergency situations, and must be approved by either the Director of Care, Nurse Manager or Administrator.*

*After November 15/21; Visitors who have not received 3 COVID vaccines will be supported to connect with their loved one via alternative means such as window visits, Skype visits and outdoor visits or visits within the facility to be arranged in advance with Recreation Manager or Infection Control Lead. The terms of use of the Family Visitation room will include:*

- *All visits must be booked 48 hours in advance.*
- *Visitors must complete and pass antigen testing prior to visiting with their loved one.*
- *Visitors must wear a procedural mask at all times for the duration of the visit.*
- *Visitor must maintain 2 meters Physical distance for the duration of the visit.*
- *A maximum of 4 visitors will be allowed to visit with the Resident in the family visitation room at a time.*

ONLY essential visitors are allowed on the home areas or in the home when a resident is self-isolating or when the home is in outbreak

Additionally, the local public health unit may provide direction and/or restrictions on visitors to the home, depending on the specific situation. All visitors to the home are

required to follow public health measures (e.g., active screening, physical distancing, hand hygiene, masking for source control) for the duration of their visit in the home.

**Screening and Rapid Testing Requirements**

**The screening requirements in Directive #3 apply to all types of visitors:**

- All Visitors be actively screened for symptoms and exposure history for COVID-19 prior to being allowed to visit the resident.
- All Essential caregivers and general visitors must have a Rapid Antigen Test completed and receive a negative result prior to beginning their visit or entering the home areas.
- ALL visitors will also be required to demonstrate proof of complete vaccination to enter the home (3 vaccines as per the home policy for visitors and staff). Exemptions will only be approved for palliative, or emergency situations, and must be approved by either the Director of Care, Nurse Manager, IPAC Lead or Administrator.
- Anyone showing symptoms of COVID-19 must not be allowed to enter the home or visit outdoors with the resident and must be advised to go home immediately to self-isolate and be encouraged to be tested.

<b>Visitors</b>	<b>Home NOT in Outbreak</b>	<b>Outbreak / Resident In Quarantine</b>
<p><b>Essential Caregiver</b></p> <p>Caregivers designated after December 15, 2021 must be fully vaccinated with 3 doses of COVID vaccine.</p>	<p>Physical distancing with the resident not required</p> <p>May support in dining room, join in activities</p>	<p>One caregiver per visit may support in resident’s room or quarantine room</p>

Max 4 per resident at a time (unless in outbreak or quarantine)	Must be screened and tested to enter home area	
Masks required at all times		
Eating and drinking not permitted		



<b>Visitors</b>	<b>Home NOT in Outbreak</b>	<b>Outbreak / Resident In Quarantine</b>
<b>Non-Essential General Visitor</b>	Physical distancing with the resident not required  May support in dining room, join in activities  Must be screened and tested to enter home area	Not permitted, unless visiting a resident receiving end of life care

**Procedure for Visitation In Absence of Full Vaccination Status;**

- All visitors to the home areas need to provide proof of 3 vaccines
- Unvaccinated visitors can make arrangements to see their loved one in one of our common areas
- Rapid Antigen Tests (provided by Lakeland) are required by all visitors
- Rapid Antigen Testing hours are Monday to Friday 7am-3:45pm; closed from 12-1 for lunch, Saturdays and Sundays 8am-3:45pm; closed from 11-12 for lunch

- A maximum of 4 visitors allowed per room, but must not meet on the home area. If you wish to gather in larger numbers, please reach out to book a bigger space
- Masks are required for your entire visit.

### **Rapid Testing Frequency**

- All Essential Caregivers and General Visitors to the home are required to have a Rapid Antigen Test completed on the “day of the visit” and await a negative result.

### **Procedure for Scheduling Visits**

1. Nurse Manager, Program Manager or IPAC Lead may approve essential visits for Residents who are receiving end of life care. Validation for Palliative Care/End of Life provided in consultation with DOC/designate if appropriate.
2. Nurse Manager, Program Manager or IPAC Lead will inform screener of palliative visitors and provide a list.
3. Visitor will need to arrive 15 minutes prior to visit to be screened by the Screener just inside the front entrance.
4. Once screened the visitor will be guided to dedicated waiting room (café) area, Screener will call Charge Nurse/RN to escort them to the resident’s room if required.
5. Visitor may ONLY visit in the Residents room and must wear all appropriate PPE.
6. Only 4 visitors may visit the resident at one time.
7. Charge Nurse/RN will escort Visitors back to Screening Desk; Visitors will be screened out by Screener.

## **Student/Faculty Placements**

### **Procedure for Attending Lakeland**

1. Students are pre-identified by the educational institution and pre-approved by the Director of Care prior to acceptance and admission to Lakeland. List of these visitors will be made available at the screening desk and added to the screener calendar.
2. Students must be screened in by the screener, pass the screening questions.
3. Students must bring their uniform to work, change in and out of the uniform (as per staff policy).
4. Students are to respect that they are visitors to the home and are to remain on their assigned units for the entire course of their placement. (Changes to this must be approved by the DOC and discussed with the Infection Control Lead or Designate).
5. Student groups must be attended/accompanied by faculty/clinical supervisors at all times when in the home.

### **Responding to Non-Adherence by Visitors**

Lakeland LTC recognizes visits are critical to supporting a resident's care needs and emotional well-being.

All efforts will be made to ensure Visitors have the proper knowledge and resources to support safe, successful visits within the home.

The impact of discontinuing visits on the resident's clinical and emotional well-being will be considered and steps will be taken to ensure that measures are proportionate to the severity of the nonadherence.

### **Policy:**

Lakeland LTC reserves the right to end a visit by any visitor who repeatedly fails to adhere to the home's visitor policy, provided:

- The home has explained the applicable requirement(s) to the visitor;
- The visitor has the resources to adhere to the requirement(s) (e.g., there is sufficient space to physically distance, the home has supplied the PPE and demonstrated how to correctly put on PPE, etc.); and
- The visitor has been given sufficient time to adhere to the requirement(s).

### **Procedure:**

1. All Visitors will be provided with a copy home's visitor policy.
2. Visitors will be provided with an opportunity to review the Visitor policy and related Visitor Education with a member of the staff prior to first visit.
3. In instances of repeated failure to follow the terms for safe visits the following will be implemented:
  - DOC or designate will arrange meeting with Visitor.
  - Terms of visitation and areas of concerns will be reviewed.
  - Strategies and alternatives to promote safe visits will be considered.
  - Plan will be documented and a copy will be kept in the Visitation Binder (Charge Nurse/RN copy)
  - The plan will contain at a minimum:
    - Outline efforts that have been made to maintain safety and support the Visitor to adhere to terms of visit

- Stipulate length of prohibition
  - Clearly identify what requirements the visitor should meet before visits may be resumed (e.g. reviewing the home's visitor policy, reviewing specific Public Health Ontario resources, etc.);
4. If further non-compliance is noted visitation will be suspended. The visitor will receive in writing the rationale for discontinuation and specific education/ training the visitor may need to complete before visiting the home again.

Where the home has temporarily prohibited a caregiver, the resident and/or their substitute decision-maker may need to designate an alternate individual as caregiver to help meet the resident's care needs.