Family, Friends & Residents
Residents Leaving and Returning to Dearness Home

The government has allowed four types of absence from long-term care homes:

1. **Medical Absences**
   Medical absences are to seek medical and/or health care:
   - Outpatient medical visits and a single visit (less than or equal to 24 hours in duration) to the Emergency Department do not require testing or self-isolation upon return to Dearness Home
   - All other medical visits (e.g., admissions/transfers to other health care facilities, multi-night stays in the Emergency Department) require testing and isolation (if applicable) upon return

2. **Compassionate/Palliative Absences**
   Compassionate/palliative absences are absences such as visiting a dying loved one.
   - Single day absences (less than or equal to 24 hours in duration) do not require testing or self-isolation upon return.
   - Overnight absences require testing and isolation (if applicable) upon return.

3. **Short-Term (day) Absences**
   Short-term or day absences are absences that are less than or equal to 24 hours in duration.
   Please Note: Testing or self-isolation of residents is not required upon return.
   There are two types of short term (day) absences:
   - **Essential absences** include absences for reasons of groceries, pharmacies, and outdoor physical activity. All individuals, regardless of their immunization status, can participate in essential absences, unless the resident is in isolation and on Droplet and Contact Precautions or as directed by the local public health unit.
   - **Social absences** include absences for all reasons not listed under medical, compassionate/palliative, and/or essential absences that do not include an overnight stay.

4. **Temporary Absences**
   Temporary absences include absences involving two or more days and one or more nights for non-medical reasons.

**Please Note:** When a Stay-At-Home Order is in effect (as per O. Reg 265/21) Essential absences are permitted but Social and Temporary absences are not permitted.
Safety During Absences

Absences from Dearness Home can expose the resident to a greater risk of COVID-19 infection. Not all residents are vaccinated, and immunization is not a perfect barrier to infection or to passing on infection.

With this individual and collective responsibility in mind, the resident and those with them should always put safety first and follow these simple steps:

- **Wear Masks:** The resident will leave Dearness Home with a surgical mask that should cover their nose and mouth throughout the absence, if tolerated. Any other person who interacts with the resident should also wear a mask.
- **Physically Distance:** The resident should remain 2 meters apart from any other person and avoid enclosed spaces wherever possible.
- **Manage Risks:** Crowds or other high-risk areas (such as malls and indoor restaurants) should be avoided.
- **Practice Hand Hygiene:** The resident and those with them should wash their hands frequently (carry hand sanitizer).

Taking a Short-Term Absence

- Permission from Dearness Home for a short-term absence is not required.
- The resident or their Essential Caregiver must sign out before leaving and sign-in on their return (use the “Dearness Sign Out/In Form” located in the binder on the wall next to the nursing station on the Home area).
- Activities outside of Dearness Home must not breach government COVID-19 restrictions.
- Departure and return must be between the hours of 9am and 4:30pm on Saturday, Sunday and Holidays, or 9am to 8pm on weekdays.

Taking a Temporary Absence

- The resident or POA/SDM must tell the RPN on the Home area at least 24 hours before the departure time (to allow time for packaged medications for the absence to be provided).
- The resident or their Essential Caregiver must sign out before leaving, and sign in on their return (use the “Dearness Sign Out/In Form” located in the binder on the wall next to the nursing station on the Home area).
- Activities outside of Dearness Home must not breach government COVID-19 restrictions.
- Departure and return must be between the hours of 9am and 4:30pm on Saturday, Sunday and Holidays, or 9am to 8pm on weekdays.
- When the resident returns to Dearness Home after being away for one or more nights, Dearness will test and isolate the resident according to the requirement in Directive #3 from the government.