MEMO

To: Dearness Home Family and Friends

From: Leslie Hancock

Date: December 15th, 2021

RE: New Government Regulations

As a response to the increasing risk from the new variant of COVID-19, yesterday the Ontario government changed regulations for those visiting long-term care Homes, and for those residents wishing to be absent from long-term care Homes.

These are the government’s revisions to the rules already in place at Dearness Home for General Visitors, effective immediately:

- General Visitors are only permitted inside the Home if they provide proof of full vaccination (2 doses)
- To book please call Dee x8273, 72 business hours in advance. HOLIDAY NOTE: the last day for booking until January 4th is quickly approaching. The last booking day for 2021 is Tuesday, Dec 21st, 2021.

These are the government’s revisions to the rules already in place at Dearness Home for Essential Caregivers, beginning Friday, December 17th:

- Essential Caregivers must be tested for COVID-19 according to government direction (please report to our in-Home testing centre each time you visit and you will be tested when required)
- Essential Caregivers who enter the Home within 14 days of out of country travel must inform the testing centre staff each time they arrive at the Home
- Effective December 20th 2021, to gain entry to the home those Essential Caregivers trained prior to December 14th must show proof of their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine
- Effective February 21, 2022, to gain entry to the Home those Essential Caregivers trained prior to December 14th must show proof of all required doses.
- Essential Caregivers designated after December 14th are required to be fully vaccinated to gain entry to the home
- Residents can designate a maximum of two Essential Caregivers (unless more than two caregivers were already designated prior to December 14th)
- Any Essential Caregiver who believes they have a valid medical contraindication to receiving vaccine must contact the Home and will be advised on next steps
These are the revisions to the government’s rules for **Resident Absences**, beginning Friday, December 17th:

- **Day absences** for social purposes are permitted for fully vaccinated residents only, and after the absence the following testing is required:
  - If no known exposure while outside:
    - Rapid test and PCR test on day 3 following absence
    - A PCR test on day 7 (no isolation is required unless positive result is received)
  - If known exposure to a positive COVID-19 case occurred while outside:
    - PCR test on day 1 and day 7 (resident isolated until a negative result is confirmed from day 7)

Note that a walk in the grounds is not considered a “Day absence.”

- **Overnight absences** for social purposes are being suspended, regardless of vaccination status.
  - Residents who wish to leave the home overnight for social purposes will need to follow the appropriate discharge process, as required in section 147.1 of O.Reg.79/10 (General) under the Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007 as well as the re-admission protocol when they apply to return at a later date
  - Essential, medical, compassionate, and palliative absences are still permitted, regardless of vaccination status

We recognize that these measures may be challenging, but as the government tells us: “These temporary enhanced and responsive measures are necessary to provide optimal safety and support to residents while balancing the mental and emotional well-being of residents and their families, and to safeguard the staff who are critical to the care of residents.”

The government also urges us to “receive a booster / third dose as they become eligible, as the latest available evidence shows that three doses of vaccine are more effective against the Omicron variant than two doses” and they remind us “of the importance of remaining vigilant with public health measures, such as masking and social distancing, both in the home and in the community.”

Thank you for continuing to help us prioritize the safety of the residents and the staff at Dearness Home. Together, we will fight the infection and eventually end this pandemic.