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| Manual: Administration Manual | Section: Organization |
| | Subject: Visits During Pandemic |

POLICY

The Dearness Home will provide an organized process to ensure a safe environment for visits that follows provincially mandated direction and Public Health infection control protocols. This policy must be read in conjunction with the appended education material and guidance documents.

PURPOSE

Within the ongoing and changing constraints of the pandemic, to seek to maintain emotional well-being by the provision of meaningful, equitable and safe access for visitors.

Not Considered Visitors

Long-term care home staff (as defined under the Act), volunteers, and student placements are not considered visitors as their access to the home is determined by the licensee.

VISITOR TYPES

Essential Visitor:

Essential visitors are persons visiting the home to meet an essential need related to the residents or the operations of the home that could not be adequately met if the person does not visit the home. They are the only visitors allowed to visit when a resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, or when the Home is in outbreak.

There are 4 types of Essential Visitors:

1. **Person visiting a very ill or end-of-life resident:**
 - ☐ End of life period is determined by the physician and communicated to the Power of Attorney/Substitute Decision Maker (POA/SDM for care) by Dearness Home

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- ☐ Essential Visitors for end of life must be designated by the resident or the SDM/POA
- ☐ End of Life Spiritual Care support from the community can also be arranged
- ☐ The end-of-Life visitor:
 - Must read the screening questions before entering the Home (but may still enter if the screen is failed)
 - Will wear the butterfly sticker provided, in a visible area of their upper bodies at all times
 - Does not have to observe visiting times

2. Government inspectors with a statutory right of entry:

Government inspectors who have a statutory right to enter long-term care homes to carry out their duties must be granted access to a home in accordance with the applicable legislation. Examples of government inspectors include inspectors under the Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021, the Health Protection and Promotion Act, the Electricity Act, 1998, the Technical Standards and Safety Act, 2000, and the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

3. Support Workers:

Support workers are persons who visit a home to provide support to the critical operations of the home or to provide essential services to residents. Essential services provided by support workers include but are not limited to:

- ☐ Assessment, diagnostic, intervention/rehabilitation, and counselling services for residents by regulated health professionals such as physicians and nurse practitioners
- ☐ Assistive Devices Program vendors — for example, home oxygen therapy vendors
- ☐ Moving a resident in or out of a home
- ☐ Social work services
- ☐ Legal services
- ☐ Post-mortem services
- ☐ Emergency services (for example, such as those provided by first

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responders)

- ☐ Maintenance services such as those required to ensure the structural integrity of the home and the functionality of the home's operational systems such as Heating, Cooling and Ventilation (HVAC), mechanical, electrical, plumbing and telecommunication systems, and services related to exterior grounds and winter property maintenance, including septic and well water system maintenance
- ☐ Food/nutrition and water/drink delivery
- ☐ Canada Post mail services and other courier services
- ☐ Election officials/workers

4. **Essential Caregiver (EC):**

Type of essential visitor who is designated by the resident and/or their POA/SDM 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).

(For full details, in Appendix see Essential Caregiver Information Package and Guidelines)

General Visitor:

A general visitor is a person who is not an essential visitor and is visiting:

- ☐ To provide non-essential services, who may or may not be hired by the home or the resident or their substitute decision maker for social reasons (for example, 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

In addition, general visitors may include persons attending the home for other purposes which may include but are not limited to:

- ☐ Personal care service providers (for example, hairdressers, barbers, manicurists, etc.)
- ☐ Entertainers

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- ☐ Recreational service providers
- ☐ Animal handlers (for example, as part of therapy animal program)
- ☐ Individuals who are touring the home to inform decisions regarding application for admission

GENERAL INFORMATION

Government COVID-19 Restrictions:

Access to the Home and restrictions to freedoms within and outside the Home will vary according to the current regulations put in place by the Province.

Communication:

Dearness Home will communicate evolving visiting information and policy by using one or more of the following:

- For Residents: via posting information on notice boards and/or TVTOUR screens, in- person conversations, and/or Resident Council minutes binder
- For POA/SDM for care: via calls from staff, robo-calls, e-mails and posting information on the Dearness Home website
- For other potential visitors: via calls from staff, robo-calls and posting information on the Dearness website

Note: Whenever practically possible, visiting changes will be implemented following either discussion with, or prior notice to, both the Resident Council and the Family Council.

Temporary Suspension of General Visits:

If Dearness is in confirmed COVID-19 outbreak, all non-essential visitations to the Home area(s) involved will be temporarily cancelled.

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RESPONSIBILITY

The Manager, Community Life will monitor and oversee the Family Visits during a Pandemic. The infection control lead will direct infection control in relation to visits to the Home. The Administrator will have overall responsibility and draft policy and related guidelines.

PROCEDURE FOR VISITS TO THE HOME:

- The Manager, Community Life will monitor and oversee visits
- The Home will create and maintain a list of Essential Caregivers, and of Essential Visitors at the end of life. These lists will be available for relevant/appropriate staff members to access
- All visitors seeking access to the Dearness Home will attend at the main entrance, read the screening questions and must not enter the Home if they answer yes to any of them

Instructions for General Visits to the Dearness Home

- Access to the Home is only available during visiting hours (9am – 9pm, 7 days a week including holidays)
- Visitors must leave the Home by 9pm and not arrive before 9am

On Arrival:

- Park near the front entrance in the parking lot accessed from Southdale Road
- Proceed to the screening area, just inside the first set of sliding doors at the front entrance
- Before entering the Home, you must:
 - Read any posted COVID-19 Notices – GENERAL VISITORS MUST NOT VISIT A RESIDENT IN A HOME-AREA CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING COVID-19 OUTBREAK
 - Clean your hands using the hand-sanitizer provided
 - Masks are supplied and it is recommended one is worn, covering both your mouth and nose
 - Read the COVID-19 screening poster - you must be able to answer no to all



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- of the screening questions in order to enter the Home
- Sign-in and provide all the details (as required by the government)
- To open the inner doors, enter the code (posted) on the access keypad next to the inner doors.

Visitor Requirements (including screening and infection control instructions)

- Essential Caregivers must follow provisions in: “Essential Caregivers Information Package and Guidelines” and in the “Essential Caregivers Education Presentation” (see Appendix)

NON-ADHERENCE BY VISITORS

The home has the discretion 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) for the visitor
- The visitor has the resources to adhere to the requirement(s) (e.g., the home has supplied the PPE and demonstrated how to correctly put on PPE, etc.);
- The visitor has been given sufficient time to adhere to the requirement(s).

The home will document when a visit has been ended due to non-adherence.

TEMPORARILY PROHIBITING A VISITOR

Dearness Home has the discretion to temporarily prohibit a visitor in response to repeated and flagrant non-adherence with the home’s visitor policy. In exercising this discretion, Dearness will consider whether the non-adherence:

- Can be resolved by successfully explaining and demonstrating how the visitor can adhere to the requirements
- Negatively impacts the health and safety of residents, staff, and other visitors in the home
- Is demonstrated by the visitor over multiple visits
- Is by a visitor whose previous visits have been ended by the home.



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Any decision to temporarily prohibit a visitor will:

- Be made only after all other reasonable efforts to maintain safety during visits have been exhausted;
- Stipulate a reasonable length of the prohibition;
- Clearly identify what requirements the visitor should meet before visits may be resumed (e.g. reviewing the home's visitor policy, reviewing Public Health Ontario resources, etc.); and
- Be documented by the home

Appendices:

- Essential Caregiver Information Package and Guidelines
- Essential Caregivers Education Presentation