



## MEMO

**TO:** Families

**From:** Tina O'Malley RN, ICC

**Date:** March 14, 2022

### **COVID- 19 Update at Valley Manor LTC**

Many have likely heard of the changes to COVID-19 restrictions in the public such as allowing full capacity in most settings and removing the requirement for proof of vaccination. There is also a plan to lift the masking requirements in different sectors over time.

For Long-Term Care homes, as the highest risk settings, the guidelines are different in many areas. The Ministry of Health also supports employers who continue to have vaccination policies.

With the safety of the residents that we are served to protect in mind, Valley Manor will proceed as follows, effective March 14, 2022:

- ✓ Masking mandates for LTC homes remain in place. All staff and visitors must continue to wear a medical mask for the duration of their shift or visit.
- ✓ Staff, students, volunteers, support workers and essential caregivers must be fully vaccinated **and have a booster dose** against COVID-19.
- ✓ General visitors must be fully vaccinated. Fully vaccinated is defined as having:
  - i. The full series of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or any combination of such vaccines
  - ii. One or two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada, followed by one dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or
  - iii. Three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada
- ✓ **Essential Caregivers** must have a Rapid Antigen test, at a minimum, two (2) times per week. A negative result obtained is valid for the next day, therefore tests will not be performed on two consecutive days. Please keep your proof of result cards to show the screener you have had 2 in one week. Once the test has been performed, the essential caregiver may proceed to the resident's room. For the purposes of testing, a week is considered to be Monday to Sunday.
- ✓ **General visitors/support workers** require proof of a negative test prior to entry, taken the day of the visit, or on the previous day. Again, a proof of result card will be provided.

The rapid testing takes approximately 20 minutes to perform. Those support workers who are regulated health professionals may enter prior to receipt of test result; otherwise, general visitors are required to wait for the result prior to entry.

- ✓ The times for testing have not changed.
- ✓ **Day absences** do not require isolation on return (for vaccinated residents), unless a high-risk exposure has occurred, but will require a rapid test and PCR test on day 5 after the absence.
- ✓ **Overnight absences** may resume for all residents regardless of vaccination status. Residents will be required to isolate until a PCR test done on day 5 is negative.
- ✓ Visitors, up to a maximum of **4** per resident (an increase from 3), may visit at a time. Please remember to keep the curtain closed between residents to provide privacy and assist with social distancing.
- ✓ General visitors must visit in the resident's room. Physical distancing with the resident is no longer required.
- ✓ Children under 5 years of age may again visit as general visitors although they are not eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. They will require rapid testing. Infants under the age of 1 are not considered visitors and are excluded from testing requirements.
- ✓ Resident activities may increase in group sizes and cohorting is no longer required except for dining. Overcrowding of spaces must still be avoided and IPAC (Infection Prevention and Control) measures followed.
- ✓ Surveillance testing for outdoor visits is no longer required.

Thank-you to all for your continued support of our home and the resident's safety. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Tina O'Malley RN, ICC