



December 8, 2020

Revised Directive #3

The Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) has updated [Directive #3](#). **The Directive is effective as of tomorrow, Wednesday December 9th**. RHRA will provide a revised Retirement Homes COVID-19 Visiting Policy shortly. RHRA will follow this with updated FAQs and a chart that outlines these revisions.

Changes to the Directive include but are not limited to:

Admissions and Transfers

When the Retirement Home is not in outbreak, admissions and transfers of existing residents back to their Retirement Home from the community or from a hospital (including ALC patients) should proceed as follows:

All admissions and transfers into the Retirement Home need to be tested for COVID-19 in accordance with the COVID-19: Provincial Testing Requirements Update. A negative result does not rule out the potential for incubating illness and all new residents who have not been previously cleared of COVID-19 must remain in isolation under Droplet and Contact Precautions for a 14-day period following arrival.

- The receiving Retirement Home must have a plan for the individual being admitted/transferred to complete 14-days of self-isolation under Droplet and Contact Precautions.
- Individuals must be placed in a single room on admission to complete their 14-day self-isolation.

Where this is not possible, individuals may be placed in a room with no more than one (1) other resident who should also be placed in isolation under Droplet and Contact Precautions. At any time, there should not be more than two (2) residents placed per room, including 3 or 4 bed ward rooms. Individuals who may have challenges with isolation due to a medical condition (e.g., dementia) should not be denied admission or transfer on this basis alone. Retirement Homes should take all precautions to ensure the completion of the required 14-day isolation period for new or transferred residents to the best of the Retirement Home's ability.

Individuals who have previously had lab-confirmed COVID-19 and have been cleared by the local public health unit within the last 90 days prior to admission/transfer do not need to be re-tested and are exempted from self-isolation.

The receiving Retirement Home must continue with other COVID-19 preparedness measures, including cohorting of residents and staff.

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an admission/transfer to a Retirement Home from a hospital may occur without the required 14-day self-isolation period provided that neither the hospital nor the Retirement Home are experiencing a COVID-19 outbreak and both the hospital and the Retirement Home are located in areas that are in the Prevent (Green) stage. This transfer may occur if the individual has had a negative COVID-19 test within 24 hours of transfer. In the event that the test result is not available within the 24-hour period, the transfer can occur, but the individual must remain in isolation in the Retirement Home until a negative test result is received. If this test result is positive, the individual must continue their self-isolation and the Retirement Home must contact their local public health unit.

Universal Masking

All staff and visitors must always comply with universal masking and must wear a surgical/procedure mask for the entire duration of their shift/visit. This is required regardless of whether the Retirement Home is in an outbreak or not.

Retirement Homes are required to have policies regarding masking for residents. It is strongly recommended that residents wear masks in common indoor areas in the Retirement Home as tolerated. Retirement Homes are also required to follow any additional directions provided by provincial, local public health unit or municipal bylaws.

Visitors

Visits are not permitted when the Retirement Home is in lockdown or located in a public health unit region where there is evidence of increasing/significant community transmission i.e., Orange (Restrict), Red (Control) or Grey (Lockdown) levels.

Essential visitors are the only type of visitors allowed when the Retirement Homes is in lockdown or located in a public health unit region in Orange (Restrict), Red (Control) or Grey (Lockdown) levels.

Triggering an outbreak assessment

In the event an outbreak of COVID-19 is declared in the RH, all staff in the entire RH and all residents in the RH must be offered testing. Any exception to this must be approved by the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

Required Steps in an Outbreak

When local public health declares an outbreak in a RH, the following measures must be taken:

- Local public health activates and chairs the Outbreak Management Team (OMT).
- For admissions or transfers refer to Admissions and Transfers above.
- If residents are taken out of the Retirement Home by family, they may not be readmitted until the outbreak is over.
- For residents that leave the Retirement Home for an out-patient medical visit, the Retirement Home must provide a mask. The resident must wear a mask while out, if tolerated, and be screened upon their return, but does not need to be self-isolated.
- Discontinue all non-essential activities, including non-medical absences

Ensure Retirement Homes COVID-19 Preparedness

Retirement Homes, in consultation with their Joint Health and Safety Committees or Health and Safety Representatives, if any, must ensure measures are taken to prepare the Retirement Home for a COVID-19 outbreak including:

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The Absences section of Directive #3 does not apply to retirement homes. The requirements related to resident absences for retirement homes should continue to be guided by applicable Retirement Home Regulatory Authority and Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility requirements and policies. **RHRA will provide a revised Retirement Homes COVID-19 Visiting Policy shortly.**



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