



COVID-19 Preparedness Self-Assessment for Retirement Homes

Introduction

The outbreak of COVID-19 in retirement homes poses a risk to the health and wellbeing of people living and working in these homes, and challenges retirement home operators who are required to provide safe, high-quality care to their residents. As the pandemic progresses, the preparedness of retirement home operators is key to maintaining essential high-quality care for residents.

Methodology

The RHRA continues to work collaboratively with the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility and community partners on provincial planning related to COVID-19 and the retirement home sector. This self-assessment tool is part of these efforts and is designed to help retirement homes assess their readiness to prevent or effectively respond to an outbreak of COVID-19 and to take proactive steps to address any gaps. The Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority (RHRA) strongly recommends that retirement home operators complete the self-assessment checklist and take immediate steps to address any gaps identified to ensure that your retirement home is prepared to prevent an outbreak and able to respond effectively if one occurs. The RHRA and other regulatory agencies are conducting inspections of retirement homes to assess their readiness to prevent or respond to an outbreak. We trust this checklist will assist you in your efforts to protect your residents. You are not required to submit this self-assessment checklist to the RHRA.

Please see RHRA's website at rhra.ca for COVID-19 information and resources available to retirement home operators.

How to Complete the Self-Assessment

Answer 'Yes' or 'No' to the series of questions regarding your home's preparedness for an outbreak of COVID-19. After answering the questions, you will need to make a judgment on your preparedness. Completion of the self-assessment in an accurate manner can help you identify gaps in your processes and to take steps to prepare moving forward. Therefore, you should think through how each item is currently being achieved and how you plan to address any gaps identified in each area below.

Judgment Descriptors

The table below shows the judgment descriptors retirement homes should use to assess their preparedness for a COVID-19 outbreak.

Prepared	Substantially Prepared	Not Prepared
This means the operator has taken the necessary steps to prepare for an outbreak of COVID-19.	This means that the operator has most of the elements of an effective plan, but some action is required.	This means the operator has not taken the necessary steps to prepare for an outbreak of COVID-19. Urgent action is required.
A. Written Policies and Procedures		
Has the operator ensured that staff have access to up-to-date COVID-19 guidance or direction issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health, Public Health Ontario, and local public health unit?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has the operator ensured that staff have access to up-to-date COVID-19 guidance or direction issued by the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has the outbreak management policy and procedures as outlined in Directive #3 (including staffing contingency) been updated and tested to reflect the risk of infection of COVID-19 variants to residents and staff working in the home?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Based on your answers to the questions above is your home:		
Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>	Substantially Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>

B. Staffing	
Is there a human resources plan in place to ensure staffing levels that are appropriate for full-service delivery? This includes plans to ensure continuity of care to residents and adequate environmental services in the event of a significant shortfall (approximately 66% reduction) of staff attending work due to required self-isolation or an outbreak of COVID-19? e.g., 12-hour shifts, cross training staff, several agencies available, volunteer staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there on-call staffing arrangements for key management positions?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has the operator reviewed the effectiveness of these on-call systems to ensure staff always have 24/7 access to managerial advice and support related to care services?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are staff aware of the requirements for reporting and managing confirmed/suspected cases of COVID-19 in any residents or staff and is someone able to assist with contact tracing if required?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Are there measures in place to:	enable physical distancing by staff?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	declare, if necessary, that staff have had contact with confirmed/suspected cases of COVID-19, and advise staff to self-isolate as per public health guidelines?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Based on your answers to the questions above is your home:		
Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>	Substantially Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>

C. Governance and Management		
Does the management in the home have the experience and training to effectively implement all public health directions and maintain oversight of the operations during an outbreak?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the operator know who to contact to support them if their contingency plans prove insufficient?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has the operator spoken with staff to alleviate fears of COVID-19 and understands which staff may leave if the home goes into outbreak?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the operator have a direct contact at a local PHU or IPAC Hub for advice?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the operator maintain an adequate supply of rapid antigen point of care testing and PCR supplies?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has the provider sourced adequate resources for use in the event of outbreak in terms of:	hand hygiene supplies?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	personal protective equipment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Isolation activities for residents?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Test kits?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has the operator reviewed each unit and floor and identified areas that operate as discrete zones to allow for appropriate isolation or cohorting of suspected and confirmed COVID-19 residents?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is there a clear policy that outlines who must be notified in the event of an outbreak? For example, all mandatory notifications are reported to the public health unit (PHU) and RHRA.		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is there a staff vaccination policy in place?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is a record of COVID-19 vaccination status kept and updated for all residents, staff, volunteers, students, and contractors and reported to the RHRA as required?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Has the operator ensured that eligible unvaccinated staff, volunteers, students, and contractors are undergoing rapid antigen testing at least once per week?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are pre-admission assessment and precautions in place? As per MOH directives?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has the operator identified a staff person to be a family liaison to ensure that families are kept informed and communicated with (in line with residents' wishes) while visiting is restricted? Also has the operator identified a means of communication to ensure that all families are kept well informed about outbreak status and visitation restrictions?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Based on your answers to the questions above is your home:	
Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>	Substantially Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>
Not Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>	

D. Individual Assessment and Care Plans	
Has the operator assessed the impact of the current or future precautions related to: physical distancing and potential isolation on residents, including the potential impact on their psychological wellbeing?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has the person in charge discussed with residents/POA their wishes should they become critically ill?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has the person in charge ensured that the resident plans of care are current with clear direction to those who may provide care to a resident in a time of crisis and inclusive of changes that have occurred?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Have behaviour management strategies been implemented to address any required changes including strategies to maintain public health prevention measures such as physical distancing?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Based on your answers to the questions above is your home:	
Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>	Substantially Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>
Not Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>	

E. Healthcare	
Are there arrangements in place for residents to be medically assessed in person or virtually by a physician or nurse practitioner?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there arrangements in place to facilitate the transfer of residents to acute care services if necessary?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there arrangements in place for medical advice and review for end-of life care?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Based on your answers to the questions above is your home:	
Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>	Substantially Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>
Not Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>	

F. Residents' Rights

While observing physical distancing measures, is the operator ensuring that each resident still has opportunity to participate in activities in accordance with their interests and capacities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Can all residents communicate and remain in contact with their families and significant others, even when in isolation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are residents informed about the public health measures that affect their daily lives?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has the operator consulted with residents if residents may be required to move from their normal accommodation? For example, in the case of isolation or cohorting?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Based on your answers to the questions above is your home:	
Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>	Substantially Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>
Not Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>	

G. Communication	
Are residents/families/SDM kept informed of the public health measures being taken in the home and the reasons for these measures?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has the operator put measures in place to facilitate residents to maintain their social and family contacts?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has the operator established partnerships with community resources (e.g., Regional IPAC Hub, Ontario Health, local public health units, hospitals, primary care other)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Based on your answers to the questions above does your home:	
Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>	Substantially Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>
Not Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>	

H. Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC)	
Is there a dedicated onsite IPAC lead who can oversee, and support proper IPAC responsibilities, protocols, and practices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is there an internal outbreak management team in place?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there consistent and verified IPAC protocols (e.g., screening and signage) and practices in place?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are residents educated about hand and respiratory hygiene?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there regular on-site IPAC assessments and frequent personal protective equipment, hand hygiene, and environmental cleaning audits?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is there access to training on IPAC and personal protective equipment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is there a process and resources for regular environmental cleaning in the home?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Is there equipment available to support appropriate access and application of all isolation protocols including PPE (e.g., Isolation caddies, adequate PPE equipment storage with 24/7 staff access etc)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there adequate contingencies for waste management, inclusive of appropriate additional waste bins (lid and foot mechanisms)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there sufficient hand hygiene supplies for staff and residents to keep all hygiene stations full for a two-week period?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there adequate stocks of disinfectant products, in line with recommendations for environmental cleaning?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are hand hygiene stations located throughout the building to ensure easy access by all staff during their shift?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Do staff and residents have access to an ongoing supply of personal protective equipment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Based on your answers to the questions above is your home:	
Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>	Substantially Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>
Not Prepared <input type="checkbox"/>	

Now that you have completed the self-assessment, take some time to reflect on any identified gaps and create a plan to close to close any gaps.

If you have any questions regarding the self-assessment tool, please contact RHRA at info@rhra.ca or call 1-855 275-7472.