

Guidelines for Visitors

Acute Care, Long-Term Care Homes, Personal Care Homes, Community Care Homes, Private Residence

Updated: December 29, 2021

1. Introduction

Temporary restrictions to visitation/attendance are in place at all provincially operated acute care facilities, health centres and long-term care homes; as well as privately operated long-term care homes, personal care homes, and community care homes. Please give consideration to using alternate communication methods such as virtual visits and phone calls to maintain contact with your loved ones, when possible, rather than in-person visiting.

Exceptions to this guidance document may occur in the following situations:

- Public Health Orders/Special Measure Orders addressing visitation/visiting restrictions in acute care, long-term care homes, personal care homes, community care homes, assisted living facilities, and private residences will take precedence over the guidance provided in this document. To view all Public Health Orders/Special Measure Orders in effect, please visit [current Public Health Orders](#).
- Regional health authorities have the discretion to implement restrictions to provincial guidance should the need arise due to the identification of COVID-19 outbreak sites and/or changes in COVID-19 prevalence within their service areas. To view the latest public service announcements for the regional health authority you wish to visit, please click on the appropriate link below.
 - Eastern Health: [Eastern Health - News Centre](#)
 - Central Health: [news, updates, advisories \(centralhealth.nl.ca\)](#)
 - Western Health: [Western Health : Current Visitor Restrictions](#)
 - Labrador-Grenfell Health: [News 2021 – Labrador-Grenfell Health \(lghealth.ca\)](#)

Thank you for your cooperation in adhering to these guidelines and following public health measures designed to provide a safe environment to patients/residents and staff in health care facilities.

2. Overall Guidance for All Settings

2.1 General Visiting

- General visiting to acute care, long-term care homes, personal care homes, community care homes, and assisted living facilities will remain restricted as outlined in this document.
- If any patient/resident is suspected to have COVID-19, personal protective equipment must be worn for the visit as per protocol. If a patient/resident is confirmed COVID-19 positive, limited visitation can occur in consultation with the care team.

- The visitation policies are based on the condition of the patient/resident at the time of the inquiry. Should the patient/resident's condition change, the visitation policy may differ from the initial information provided. The facility has the right to refuse visitation based on the current condition of the patient/resident.
- All visitor(s) must be screened upon arrival, prior to the visit beginning. Visits will only proceed for individuals who meet the screening criteria.
- All visitor(s) are required to wear a face mask in indoor public spaces and perform appropriate hand hygiene, where tolerated. The clinical care team will advise the visitor(s) when additional personal protective equipment is required to be worn while with the patient/resident.
- Individuals who are feeling unwell or sick should not present for visits.
- Residents are not permitted to leave the home/facility unless to attend necessary/urgent medical appointments or for extenuating circumstances which must be approved by a manager of the home/facility.
- Volunteers may continue as per current guidelines. Hairdressers are volunteers.

Visitation may be suspended if visitors are not abiding by procedures/facility policies.

2.2 Support Person

- Visitation is restricted to one support person for residents/patients who require a support person.
 - A support person is an individual considered by the patient/resident's care team to be paramount to the resident's physical care and mental well-being, and can be a loved one, friend, or paid caregiver. They may provide assistance with feeding, mobility, personal care, communication assistance or assistance with significant behavioural symptoms.
- When possible, the support person should remain constant for the duration of the visiting restrictions at health care/residential care homes. In the event the patient/resident has a stay exceeding two weeks, the support person can be changed every fourteen days.
- A pastoral support person is part of the care team and is in addition to the support person.

2.3 Guidance for Support Person Visitation

- The patient/resident/family will coordinate the visiting times, ensuring that physical distancing requirements can be maintained by the support person in the space available.
- The support person can visit at any time.

- The support person must not visit any other patient/resident or staff and must go straight to the patient/resident room or visitation space.
- When visiting a patient/resident in a multi-bed room, visitors are reminded that physical distancing is recommended, as much as possible. As well, please keep in mind the comfort level of the other patients/residents of the room.
- Individuals who are required to self-isolate are permitted to provide support/visit only in the specific situations outlined in **Section 3.1 Obstetrics** and **Section 5.1 End-of Life Visiting – All Facilities**, and only in consultation with the clinical care team of the patient/resident.

Please note: Some areas may not be able to accommodate multiple visitor(s) due to the need to maintain physical distancing requirements. In these cases, clinical care teams will work with patient/resident/families to identify visitation options.

3. ACUTE CARE

3.1 Obstetrics

- A support person can be an individual who is required to isolate, providing the individual is asymptomatic and abides by all infection prevention and control measures of the facility.

3.2 Out-Patient Care

- In keeping with public health guidance to reduce the number of contacts wherever possible, patients are asked to carefully consider the necessity of an attendee for appointments at ambulatory clinics or when presenting to an emergency room. To support that guidance, patients who can safely manage their interaction for out-patient care without assistance/support should attend unaccompanied.
- Patients who are accompanied by an attendee should be aware that during peak times, attendees who have remained in the waiting area may be asked to wait outside the facility, if possible, to ensure adequate space is available in the waiting area for patients. The care team will accommodate the attendee in the treatment area when requested by the patient.

4. LONG-TERM CARE AND PERSONAL CARE/COMMUNITY CARE HOMES

- Refer to Section 2.0 for general guidance.

4.1 Visitation Options

- Homes may accommodate in-home and outdoor visiting, and must abide by public health guidance in establishing visiting options.
- Residents in need of assistance should be supported to attend a visit.
- Activities or events for residents should be done in cohorts, as much as possible.

5. END-OF-LIFE VISITING

- Refer to Section 2.0 for overall general guidance.

5.1 Patients/Residents at End-of-Life – All Care Facilities

- End-of-life visiting by individuals required to self-isolate and are asymptomatic may be permitted only when the clinical care team has determined the patient/resident is nearing end-of-life (actively dying).
- Visitation by individuals during their isolation will only occur as discussed and coordinated with the clinical care team and the primary support person or substitute decision maker.

5.2 Visiting in Private Residence by Individuals who are required to Self-Isolate

- An individual who is required to self-isolate and wishes to see a loved one at end-of-life who is living in their own home, must take the following actions:
 - Contact the primary care provider for your loved one 24 hours before entering the province to:
 - Advise that you will be coming to the province and will be in the home with your family member; and,
 - Determine the level of care you may or may not be able to provide to the person.
- If you are residing with the family member, please isolate in another area of the residence when other individuals, such as health care providers, are present.
- You may leave self-isolation only for the purpose of completing the visit.