

Information Bulletin #4 – March 26, 2020 About Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

For all Residents, Families, and Friends of Homeland Housing

The Chief Medical Officer of Health announced enhanced **COVID-19 protection measures** for residents living in supportive living, seniors' lodges and long-term care. As such, additional measures must be taken to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including COVID-19, among seniors and vulnerable groups living in Homeland Housing Lodges and Supportive Living sites. Individuals over 60 years of age and those with pre-existing health conditions are most at risk of severe symptoms from COVID-19.

Based on the directive from the Chief Medical Officer of Health, Homeland Housing is implementing the following changes at our Lodge and Supportive Living sites **effective today:**

- **Resident Movement Outside of the Lodge** – **All** residents must stay on the site's property unless they need necessary supplies. Examples include groceries (where delivery is not available), walking or exercising, or attending necessary medical appointments. **Social distancing** must be practiced when outdoors. **Upon re-entry to the lodge**, residents must undergo a health screening self-assessment and have their temperature taken.
- **Visitors** – As outlined in **Bulletin #3 (March 19, 2020) only one essential visitor** may visit a resident in a long-term care, supportive living, and lodge site. The essential visitor must complete the health screening self-assessment and have their temperature taken. **Visiting MUST** take place in the resident's room/suite only. Dining areas, lounges or other common area spaces in the lodge may not be used for visiting purposes. Alberta Health defines an **essential visitor** as a person over 18 years of age, selected by the resident to be their single essential visitor **that provides care and companionship for their well-being**. The essential visitor can be a family member, friend or paid companion.
- **Meal Services** – Self-serve buffets are closed. Staff will portion food items from the buffet, which is our normal operational practice. Cloth tablecloths and napkins are discontinued. All condiment containers, table centrepieces are removed. Portion packets of salt, pepper, sugar, cream may be used. **Social Distancing** is practiced by seating a **maximum of two residents per table** and spacing tables six (6) feet apart whenever dining room space allows.

For the latest information about COVID-19, please visit:

Government of Alberta www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx

Alberta Health Services www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16944.aspx

Government of Canada www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html

- **Meal Services** – To allow for **social distancing**, some of sites will adopt two mealtime sittings, or provide dining services in lounge areas to support Social Distancing.
- **Recreation Services** – Group recreation activities should be cancelled wherever possible **OR limited to a maximum of five residents** provided they are meeting social distancing requirements. **Only** non-symptomatic or non-isolating residents may participate. Gift shops and tuck shops are closed. Recreation supplies and items that **cannot be easily cleaned and disinfected** such as puzzles and magazines must be removed. Items such as bingo cards or games must be wipeable on disposable. Communal recreation items must be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- **Surveillance Monitoring of Residents and Employees** - Early recognition and swift action is critical for effective management of COVID-19. Seniors are at a higher risk of severe COVID-19 illness. **Residents and Staff** must complete a health screening self-assessment and have their temperature taken each time they **enter and re-enter the lodge**. Staff with a temperature will be asked to go home and begin self-isolation. Residents not passing the health assessment screening form and/or having a temperature of 38C are required to **immediately** self-isolate to their room/suite and required to wear a medical procedure face mask as they travel from the entryway to their room.
- **Hand Hygiene** – Residents and essential visitors are reminded of the importance of hand hygiene in controlling the spread of COVID-19. Please practice hand hygiene upon **entry and exit from rooms and suites** AND upon **entry or exit from the site**. In addition to hand washing, hand sanitizer dispensers are available throughout the common areas and entry/exit to the site.
- **Resident Self-Isolation** – Residents with cold like symptoms, influenza like illness, gastrointestinal illness, COVID-19 symptoms and a COVID-19 diagnosis **must self-isolate for 14 days**. Unwell residents are not allowed to be in any of the site's shared common areas.
- **Hair Salon and Visiting Health Services** – Visiting health services such as podiatry and hair salon/aesthetics **remain cancelled**.
- **Enhanced Cleaning** – High touch surfaces and common areas are to be cleaned and disinfected **three times daily** with an approved disinfectant with a DIN and viricidal claim.

Homeland Housing understands these measures are difficult but necessary to protect our residents and staff. We encourage families to reach out to residents daily. Even spending a few minutes on the telephone can go a long way toward reducing feelings of loneliness, isolation, and anxiety during these onerous times.

Over the coming weeks, Homeland Housing will continue to provide regular updates while we all adjust to the 'new normal.' Thank you for patience, cooperation and support over the coming weeks. Working together, we can reduce the spread of COVID-19.