

RHRA update

Latest news, information and resources for Retirement Home Operators and Licensees

March 14, 2020

RHRA Provides Clarification on Expectations Regarding Visitors to Retirement Homes

Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health has recommended that retirement homes and long-term care homes **allow only essential visitors**. In the context of retirement homes, the ministry is identifying essential visitors as those who have a resident who is dying or very ill. These visitors must continue to be actively screened into these settings.

The [screening tool](#) can be used as a guide. **Those who fail screening will not be permitted to enter**. No other visitors should be permitted to enter these premises, instead they should be asked to keep in touch with loved ones by phone or other technologies, as available.

The situation related to the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve. We know that elderly people are at highest risk when it comes to the effects of the disease. To this end, the RHRA is aligning its COVID-19 response with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Long-Term Care to ensure clear and consistent communication and action. In this context, RHRA is clarifying its expectations related to implementing the following practices as part of the COVID-19 response efforts.

The Retirement Homes Act requires retirement homes to comply with safety standards including with respect to fire, safety and public health requirements (Sec. 60(3) and Regulation

s. 27) including using prevailing practices for screening for infectious diseases. The RHRA considers that failure to follow the steps set out in this communication may jeopardize resident health, safety or well-being.

In addition, the Ministry of Health has provided a [new case definition](#).

These measures are to help ensure the safety of vulnerable residents and will be evaluated over time by the Chief Medical Officer of Health. If you have any questions, please contact the RHRA at 1-855-ASK-RHRA or at info@rhra.ca.



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