



VISITORS POLICY

Manual: Infection Prevention and Control

Section: Infection Control

Policy Title: Visitors Policy

Policy Number:

Cross Reference:

Issued by: Administrator / Director of Care / IPAC Coordinator

Approved By: Administrator

Approval Date: September 2020

Review Date: June 2022

Preamble

As of June 11, 2022, [Directive #3](#) for Long-Term Care Homes issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) under the [Health Protection and Promotion Act](#) has been revoked. Therefore, the Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC) is providing updates to the measures set out in this guidance document to remove references to [Directive #3](#) (PDF) and include any applicable provisions.

The Golden Plough Lodge will follow the “COVID-19 guidance document for long-term care homes in Ontario” to support visitors and residents. the Ministry of Health has mandated a gradual, staged resumption of visits.

The gradual re-opening of the Golden Plough Lodge to visitors will be reflective of Haliburton-Kawartha-Pine Ridge (HKPR) District Health Unit and Northumberland County COVID-19 prevalence and local risks.

Purpose

All long-term care homes must have a visitor policy in place that is compliant with the [Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care guidance documents](#).

Therefore, the purpose of this policy is to provide a framework to support the gradual, staged return of visitors while ensuring:

VISITORS POLICY

- **Safety** - any approach to visiting must balance the health and safety needs of residents, staff, and visitors, and ensure risks are mitigated;
- **Emotional Well-being** - welcoming visitors is intended to support the mental and emotional well-being of residents by reducing any potential negative impacts related to social isolation;
- **Equitable access** - all residents must be given equitable access to receive visitors, consistent with their preferences and within reasonable restrictions that safeguard residents;
- **Flexibility** - the physical and infrastructure characteristics of the home, its workforce or human resources availability, whether the home is in an outbreak and the current status of the home with respect to personal protective equipment (PPE) are all variables to consider when setting home-specific policies; and
- **Equality** - residents have the right to choose their visitors. In addition, residents, or their substitute decision-makers, as applicable, have the authority to designate caregivers.

Responsibility

Staff

Visitors – (General visitors, Essential caregivers)

Appendices

- A. Outdoor Visiting
- B. Indoor Visiting
- C. Short Stay and Temporary Absences
- D. Essential Caregiver Visits

Types of Visitors

Not considered visitors - Long-term care home staff, volunteers and student placements are not considered visitors as their access to the home is determined by the home. Infants under the age of one are also not considered visitors and are excluded from testing requirements.

Essential caregivers - There are no limits on the total number of essential visitors allowed to come into a home at any given time, under this guidance.



VISITORS POLICY

- Essential caregivers are the only type of visitors allowed when there is an outbreak in a home or area of a home or when a resident has failed screening, is symptomatic or in isolation.
- in the case where a resident resides in an area of the home in outbreak, is symptomatic or isolating under additional precautions, only one caregiver may visit at a time.

A caregiver should not visit any other home for **10 days** after visiting:

- an individual with a confirmed case of COVID-19
- an individual experiencing COVID-19/covid 19 symptoms

As of February 7, 2022, a **maximum of 4 caregivers** may be designated per resident at a time. Caregivers who were designated prior to December 15th, 2021, may continue to be designated as a caregiver even if this means the resident has more than 4 designated caregivers.

General visitors - A general visitor is a person who is not an essential visitor and is visiting to provide non-essential services related to either the operations of the home or a particular resident or group of residents. General visitors include those persons visiting for social reasons as well as visitors providing non-essential services such as personal care services, entertainment, or individuals touring the home.

All general visitors, including children under the age of five, can enter the Golden Plough Lodge;

- Visitors are not required to provide proof of vaccination to enter Golden Plough Lodge
- Up to four visitors (including caregivers) per resident may visit at a time for indoor visits;
- There are no limits on the number of visitors permitted for outdoor visits;
- Social distancing must be maintained (a minimum of two meters or six feet) between groups indoors and outdoors.

Please note: This is current MOLTC direction and/or directives and may subject to change.

Restrictions During Outbreaks

Essential caregivers - Are the only type of visitors allowed when a resident is isolating or resides in a home or area of the home in an outbreak. Only one caregiver may visit at a time;

General visitors - Are not permitted to visit an isolating resident when a home or area of a home is in outbreak, and/or when directed by the local public health.



VISITORS POLICY

Covid-19 Asymptomatic Screening/Testing

Visitors must be screened and obtain a rapid antigen test (RAT) daily upon arrival at the Golden Plough Lodge. The rapid antigen test is valid for a 24-hour period.

If you tested positive for COVID-19 using the RAT, you:

1. Will not be permitted entry into the home;
2. Will be required to go home and isolate;
3. Must obtain a PCR test in the community;
4. Must contact your local public health unit and follow their directives.

****Palliative and emergency situations** – screening and testing for caregivers and general visitors is not required in an emergency situation or in situations where these individuals are visiting or attending to residents receiving end-of-life care.

Any violation of Golden Plough Lodge policies, Ministry of Long-Term Care directives or non-compliance with HKPR Public Health direction places the Residents of this Home at risk and will result in the immediate end to the visit and will be the basis for discontinuation of future visits.



VISITORS POLICY

Appendix A - Outdoor Visiting

Golden Plough Lodge has designated an outdoor area where visitors can meet with loved ones. **Staff will support the transfer of residents to and from the dedicated outdoor area and monitor each visit.**

Number of Visitors Permitted - Unlimited

This is subject to current MOLTC direction and/or directives

Scheduling of Visits

- Visits must be prescheduled to allow for appropriate physical distancing and staff coverage
- Visiting hours are **Monday-Sunday 10am to 6pm**
- Scheduling visits will:
 - Provide meaningful and equitable access to visits for all residents; and,
 - Consider staffing and space capacity available to maintain safety of residents, staff and visitors.
- The resident's needs come first and will be considered at all times during visits.

Visitor Requirements

Visitors should consider their personal health and susceptibility to the COVID-19 virus in determining whether outdoor visiting is appropriate. Where it is not possible or advisable for outdoor visits, virtual and window visits will remain an option should indoor visits not be possible.

Prior to each outdoor visit each visitor must:

1. **Pass active screening protocols** administered by home staff or third-party surveillance, specifically that visitors be screened for symptoms and exposures for COVID-19 and attesting to not be experiencing any of the typical and atypical symptoms;
2. **Comply with Golden Plough Lodge Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) protocols**, including proper use of face/surgical masks or face coverings. Visitors must provide and wear a face covering at all times which may be a well-fitted fabric, procedural mask or medical mask; and
3. **Visitors must adhere to physical distancing** of 2 meters/6 feet during the visit between groups.



VISITORS POLICY

Note: The above points are aligned with best practices, MOLTC Directives and Public Health guidance and therefore are subject to change.



VISITORS POLICY

Appendix B - Indoor Visiting

Golden Plough Lodge has designated an indoor area where visitors can meet with loved ones. **Staff will support the transfer of residents to and from the dedicated indoor area and monitor each visit.**

Number of Visitors Allowed - Up to **four** visitors (including caregivers) per resident may visit at a time for indoor visits.

Scheduling of Visits

- Visits must be prescheduled to allow for appropriate physical distancing and staff coverage
- Visiting hours are **Monday-Sunday 10am to 6pm**
- Established scheduling practices will:
 - Provide meaningful and equitable access to visits for all residents; and,
 - Consider staffing and space capacity available to maintain safety of residents, staff, and visitors.
- The individual needs of residents will be considered at all times during visits.

Visitor Requirements

Prior to each indoor visit each visitor must:

1. **Pass active screening protocols** administered by home staff or third party surveillance, specifically that visitors be screened for symptoms and exposures for COVID-19, including temperature checks and attesting to not be experiencing any of the typical and atypical symptoms;
2. **Obtain a rapid antigen test (RAT) daily** upon arrival at the Golden Plough Lodge;
 - If you tested positive for COVID-19 using the RAT you:
 - Will not be permitted entry into the home;
 - Will be required to go home and isolate;
 - Must obtain a PCR test in the community;
 - Must contact your local public health unit and follow their directives.
3. **Review the educational material** (Infection Prevention and Control Package for Visitors/Caregivers) provided by the home that addresses how to don/doff required PPE and hand hygiene techniques. Sign off the consent form.
 - Visitors must provide and wear a well-fitted surgical/procedural mask
 - Visitors must adhere to physical distancing of 2 meters/6 feet between families.



VISITORS POLICY

Appendix C - Short Stay and Temporary Absences

The "[COVID-19 guidance document for long-term care homes in Ontario](#)" defines these absences and the requirement for Residents, Family Members and Friends to leave the Golden Plough Lodge/Northumberland County Property for the absence period.

Congregating, visiting, or socializing on the Golden Plough Lodge and/or Northumberland County grounds or Parking lots is in contravention to the "[COVID-19 guidance document for long-term care homes in Ontario](#)" definition and directive regarding Short Stay Absences. If you have any questions about what is considered an absence or which options apply to you, please contact the IPAC Coordinator at 905-372-8759 ext. 3290.

Short Stay Absences

- Residents may leave the home's property on a short stay absence for health care-related, social, or other reasons. This does not include an overnight stay, except for single-night emergency room visits;
- Residents on a short stay absence must always wear a medical mask when outside the home (if tolerated). The home must provide the medical mask and remind residents about the importance of public health measures including physical distancing;
- Residents returning from a short stay absence must be actively screened but are not required to be tested or self-isolate;
- Emergency room visits that take place over a single night (e.g., assessment and discharge from the emergency department spans one overnight period) should also be considered equivalent to an outpatient medical visit that does not require testing or self-isolation upon return.

To Arrange a Short Stay Absence

- Please contact the RN in charge of your Resident Home Area, at least 24 hours in advance of the date and time of a Resident Day Trip/Short Stay Absence;
- At the arranged time and date, please arrive at the Courthouse Road Entrance. Please wear a mask and enter the building, announcing your arrival to our receptionist;
- Please complete the Resident Absence Register located at the Reception Desk;
- The Resident will be brought to the Courthouse Road Reception Area and be provided with a mask;
- The Resident and their Family Member(s) will exit the Courthouse Road doors;
- Upon return, the Resident will be brought to the Reception Desk and their return announced to Reception Staff;



VISITORS POLICY

- Golden Plough Lodge Nursing Staff will escort the Resident back to their room where they will be actively screened.

Temporary Absences

- Residents may also leave the home's property for a temporary absence (two or more days and one or more nights) for personal reasons. The home must review and approve the temporary absence based on a case-by-case risk assessment;
- No isolation is required unless the resident has a known exposure to a case or symptomatic person while on their absence. A polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test **on day five** following the absence must be obtained;
- If a home denies a temporary absence request, the home must communicate this to the resident/substitute decision maker in writing, including the rationale for this decision.

To Arrange a Temporary Absence

The Director of Care is responsible for considering and approving all requests for Resident Temporary Absences from the Golden Plough Lodge and may be reached at 905-372-8759, extension 3270. Requests for Resident Temporary Absences will be considered on an individual, case by case basis.

Please note - The Courthouse Road Entrance Doors are locked at 10:00 pm and we ask that all Residents return prior to that time. After 10:00 pm the Security Guard will have to be summoned to open the door and the Resident will be deemed to have left the home on a Temporary as opposed to Short Stay Absence, necessitating testing requirements.



VISITORS POLICY

Appendix D - Essential Caregiver Visits

Essential Caregiver Visiting Hours

Monday - Sunday, 10:00 am to 6:00 pm

Definition

“**caregiver**” means an individual who,

- A. is a family member or friend of a resident or a person of importance to a resident,
- B. can comply with all applicable laws including any applicable directives, orders, guidance, advice or recommendations issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health or a medical officer of health appointed under the Health Protection and Promotion Act,
- C. provides one or more forms of support or assistance to meet the needs of the resident, including providing direct physical support such as activities of daily living or providing social, spiritual, or emotional support, whether on a paid or unpaid basis,
- D. is designated by the resident or the resident’s substitute decision-maker with authority to give that designation, if any, and
- E. in the case of an individual under 16 years of age, has approval from a parent or legal guardian to be designated as a caregiver.

Designation of Essential Caregivers

A maximum of **four** essential caregivers may be designated per resident at a time. The designation should be made in writing to the home. The decision to designate an individual as an essential caregiver is entirely the remit of the resident and/or their substitute decision-maker. Examples of caregivers include family members who provide meaningful connection, a privately hired caregiver, paid companions, and translators.

A resident and/or their substitute decision-maker may change a designation in response to a change in the:

- Resident’s care needs that are reflected in the plan of care, or
- Availability of a designated caregiver, either temporary (e.g., illness) or permanent

Essential Caregiver Requirements

1. Must be at least 16 years of age;

VISITORS POLICY

2. Essential Caregivers are required to review this policy prior to initial visit, and monthly thereafter;
3. Must be screened prior to entering the home and obtain and rapid antigen test upon arrival, each visit;
4. May only use a designated visitor washroom which are located near the Auditorium and at the Courthouse Road entrance.

Prior to Each Visit

1. Enter at the Burnham Street (East) entrance adjacent to the Visitor parking area;
2. Complete the active screening;
3. Proceed to completing a rapid antigen test (RAT);
 - a. If you tested positive for COVID-19 using the RAT you will not be permitted entry into the home;
 - b. You will be required to go home and isolate;
 - c. Obtain a PCR test in the community;
 - d. Contact your local public health unit and follow their directives.
4. Review the educational material (Infection Prevention and Control Package for Visitors/Caregivers) provided by the home that addresses how to don/doff required PPE and hand hygiene techniques. Remember to sign off the consent form;
5. If direct care is being provided by the Essential Caregivers, they must discuss with Registered staff first, to determine if additional PPE is required and obtain education on how to don/doff the additional PPE.