

# family update

September 17, 2020

Dear families, residents, and staff,

We continue to be free of COVID-19 at all our Covenant Care centres.

In our message to you last week, we promised to provide you with information regarding the Chief Medical Officer of Health's Order 32-2020 which impacts continuing care and supportive living centres. Overall, the order allows for greater interaction with appropriate precautionary measures in place.

Please be assured that we continue to monitor everyone very, very closely and our team is diligent in following precautions at work, as they are out and about in the community, and at home. As there are more visitors in our centres, residents attending appointments in the community, and the possibility of a resident leaving the centre overnight, the risk of transmission is also greater. We must continually evaluate our collective risk tolerance—yours, our staff, and our leadership team. This will require ongoing assessment and discussion.

Salient points in public health order 23-2020 include:

## Difference between isolation and quarantine

The order clarifies the difference between isolation and quarantine as follows:

Isolation	Quarantine
If your loved one is <i>showing symptoms or is confirmed</i> to have COVID-19 they will be isolated	If your loved one was <i>potentially exposed</i> to COVID-19 they will be quarantined and their symptoms monitored
In isolation, your loved one would remain in their room and away from others for 14 days from symptom onset or until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer.	In quarantine, your loved one would remain in their room and away from others for 14 days, which is the incubation period of COVID-19
The purpose of isolation is to reduce the risk of transmission to others	The purpose of quarantine is to reduce the risk of transmission should your loved one become positive for COVID-19

We will notify you immediately if there is any reason for your loved one to be isolated or in quarantine. At this time no one in Covenant Care is in isolation or quarantine.

## Health screening

**Visitor screening**—The health screening which includes completing the screening form and having your temperature taken along with the safe visitation education is working well and will continue. We will also be recording your name, contact information, and the date and time of both your entry and exit.

**Staff screening**—Staff continue to work at a single site only, are screened upon their arrival to work and complete a self-assessment twice a day.

### Status communication

You will see a poster at the entrance to the centre that tells you what the status is on that day: outbreak prevention, under investigation, or confirmed COVID-19 outbreak:

Outbreak Prevention	Under Investigation	Confirmed COVID-19 Outbreak
No residents or staff show any symptoms of COVID-19	At least one resident or staff show one or more symptoms of COVID-19	At least one resident or staff member has tested positive for COVID-19

Status of each centre will be posted weekly on our website at [covenantcare.ca](http://covenantcare.ca). You will be notified as soon as possible should we be in an outbreak situation.

### Resident outings

Seniors continue to be among the most high risk to experience severe outcomes of COVID-19. The order is clear in articulating that seniors must remain vigilant at all times to prevent potential exposure and transmission of the virus. The preference remains for your loved ones to remain at the centre unless absolutely necessary. It is recommended that residents do not participate in unnecessary outings.

If your loved one does leave the centre either for an outing or overnight, we will assess the risk of potential or unknown exposure to COVID-19 (low, medium, high risk) and ensure appropriate precautions are accordingly in place.

Before your loved one leaves the centre for an outing or overnight stay we will talk through best practices including physical distancing, continuous masking, frequent handwashing, safe transportation, minimizing number of interactions, containing risk of exposure, etc. Residents who follow all precautions and requirements will be considered low risk. Residents who do not follow all precautions and requirements will be considered medium to high risk and may be asked to follow additional safety precautions such as continuous masking or quarantining, depending on the activity they engaged in while away from the centre.

We are counting on you and your loved one to be open and honest about potential risk of exposure should you leave the centre with your loved one because potential exposure can compromise the health and safety of everyone at the centre including residents and staff.

### Resident interaction

Resident interaction can increase in the form of recreational activities and dining. For dining, our plan is to have up to six residents per table with the number of tables in the dining room dependent on being two meters apart. We will resume low risk social activities such as religious services and crafts. Interaction will slowly increase over time and will depend on many health and safety factors.

### Volunteers

Order 32-2020 allows for volunteers to come back into our centres, with appropriate precautions in place. We are looking forward to welcoming volunteers—we have missed them. Each centre is developing a plan to safely support the return of volunteers, thinking through the number of volunteers that can be onsite at any given time, the types of activities they can reasonably support, etc. Volunteers will be screened upon their arrival and will adhere to public health protocols including continuous masking and frequent handwashing.

### Thank you

Thank you for your patience as we have reviewed and discussed the latest public health order and for all your support over the past six months. We are doing our very best to implement

changes as they are released by the Chief Medical Officer of Health and to take very precaution to keep residents and staff safe and healthy.

We have been paying very close attention to the latest numbers and information since schools opened earlier this month and the complement of staff in office buildings has increased. Government, Alberta Health Services, and our care community continue to learn more and more about the virus and are making decisions based on the most up-to-date information available.

As always, please contact your Site Administrator with questions or send them to us at [admin@covenantcare.ca](mailto:admin@covenantcare.ca).

The most recent public health information on COVID-19 is available at [ahs.ca/COVID](https://ahs.ca/COVID). Updates, information, and good news stories on our centres is available at [covenantcare.ca](https://covenantcare.ca)

Please keep in good health, remember to wear a mask, wash your hands, and maintain physical distance. We truly are in this together.

Derrick Bernardo  
President

JoAnn Molloy  
Vice-President, Resident Experience