



Family and Friends – Residents Leaving and Returning to Dearness Home

The government has changed the law and has directed that, with certain restrictions and expectations, residents may now leave long term care Homes. The following is a guide to the new regulations and to what to expect when picking up or returning a resident to the Home.

Safety First

Please always remember that COVID-19 is a life-threatening disease that is particularly deadly for older persons.

Within Dearness Home our infection control precautions are extensive and successful, whereas outside the Home there remains a considerable risk of contracting the disease.

We ask that careful consideration is given to the need to leave the building and the potential risks the resident may encounter while outside.

For safety, when outside Dearness Home please ensure that:

- Both you, the resident and any other person they will meet, wear a mask at all times
- The resident remains 2 meters distant from any other person
- Crowded or other high-risk areas are avoided
- Both you and the resident wash your hands frequently

The government has allowed two types of absence, detailed below:

Short Stay Absence

- A short stay absence does not include an overnight stay, with the exception of single-night emergency room visits.

- Residents may leave the Home's property for a short stay absence for health care-related, social, or other reasons, but they must return by 9pm
- There is no access into the Home to pick up a resident so please:
 - o If the resident is independent, mobile and cognitively well, arrange with them to meet you at the front entrance at the appointed time
 - o If the resident cannot independently travel to the front entrance, call the staff on their Home unit ahead of time (at least one hour prior) to arrange for them to be taken to the doors (note: operational needs may mean that some delays may occur)
- On your arrival at the Home the Screener will:
 - o Ask you to remain outside the lobby area at all times
 - o Ask you who they are and who you are picking up
 - o Ask you to wear a mask at all times you are with the resident
- Residents have the choice to go out or remain in the Home and they will not leave the building if they express their wish to stay.
- When the resident leaves Dearness Home the Screener will:
 - o Provide a medical mask and tell them it is to be worn at all times when outside of the Home (if they can tolerate it)
 - o Remind them about the importance of hand washing and staying 2 meters apart from others to maintain physical distancing
 - o Ensure the resident or the person taking them out signs out
- When residents returns to Dearness Home the Screener will:
 - o Ensure the resident performs hand hygiene
 - o Ensure the resident or the person returning them signs them back in
 - o Fully screen the resident, including the temperature check – a family member may answer the questions for the resident if they are not capable of answering themselves
 - o Inform the receptionist (or, if there is no receptionist at the desk, inform the RN) that the resident has returned

Temporary Absence

- Temporary Absences involve overnight stays outside the building
- The government see this as a much greater risk and requests for such absences must be made to nursing department management (please call reception, Monday to Friday, between 8:30 and 4pm)
- Nursing management will review and approve all temporary absences based on a case by case risk assessment considering, but not limited to, the following:
 - The Home's ability to support self-isolation for 14 days upon the resident's return.
 - Local disease transmission and activity.
 - The risk associated with the planned activities that will be undertaken by the resident while out of the Home.
 - The resident's ability to comply with local and provincial polices/ bylaws.
 - Any further direction provided by the Ministry of Long Term Care.
- If nursing management denies a temporary absence request, they will communicate this to the resident/substitute decision maker in writing, including the rationale for this decision
- Residents leaving and returning to Dearness Home will be required to follow the steps detailed above under "Short Stay Absence"