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Pandemic Task Force / Groupe de travail sur la pandémie
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To/Dest. : Horizon Health Network / Réseau de santé Horizon
Vitalité Health Network / Réseau de santé Vitalité
EM/ANB Inc.
Social Development / Développement social

From/Exp. : NB Pandemic Task Force/Groupe de travail sur la pandémie du N.-B.

Copies :

Subject/Objet : Memo #38: Designated support people and offsite visitation /
Note no. 38 : Personnes de soutien désignées et visites à l'extérieur des établissements

For several months, New Brunswick's long-term care facilities and hospitals have been managing a restrictive visitation policy designed to protect our vulnerable residents from COVID-19.

The Pandemic Task Force is pleased to advise that the current epidemiology of COVID-19 in New Brunswick will permit us to further relax these restrictions.

Designated support people are often family members and are an important part of a resident's care team. Long-term care facilities that wish to reintroduce designated support people are now permitted to do so, providing the attached guidance is followed. Facilities should not unreasonably deny entry to designated support persons, however, implementation of this guideline may vary from facility to facility based on operational ability to safely support these visits.

Depuis plusieurs mois, les établissements de soins de longue durée et les hôpitaux du Nouveau-Brunswick gèrent une politique de visite restrictive conçue pour protéger nos résidents vulnérables contre la COVID-19.

Le Groupe de travail sur la pandémie est heureux d'annoncer que la situation épidémiologique actuelle de la COVID-19 au Nouveau-Brunswick permettra d'assouplir davantage ces restrictions.

Les personnes de soutien désignées sont souvent des membres de la famille et constituent une partie importante de l'équipe de soins d'un résident. Les établissements de soins de longue durée qui souhaitent accueillir de nouveau les personnes de soutien désignées sont maintenant autorisés à le faire, pourvu qu'ils suivent les consignes ci-jointes. Les établissements ne devraient pas refuser de façon déraisonnable l'entrée aux personnes de soutien désignées, mais la mise en œuvre de la présente ligne directrice peut varier d'une installation à l'autre en fonction de la capacité opérationnelle de soutenir ces visites en toute sécurité.

Off-site visits, whether day visits or overnight visits, provide an important break from the routine for residents and patients. The Task force is also pleased that off-site visits can be reintroduced, effective immediately, as long as the attached guidance can be respected.

The Pandemic Task Force continues to monitor the presence of COVID-19 in New Brunswick. Should community transmission become an issue in New Brunswick returns to a red or orange phase of recovery, restrictions on designated support people and off-site visits may once again be necessary. This direction could also be given by Public Health.

Sincerely,

The Pandemic Task Force,



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Deputy Minister /
Sous-ministre



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Les visites à l'extérieur des établissements, qu'il s'agisse de visites de jour ou de nuit, sont importantes pour les résidents et les patients, car elles leur permettent un répit dans la routine. Le Groupe de travail est également heureux d'annoncer que les visites à l'extérieur des établissements sont de nouveau autorisées, à compter de maintenant, pourvu que les consignes ci-jointes soient suivies.

Le Groupe de travail sur la pandémie continue à surveiller l'apparition de symptômes de la COVID-19 au Nouveau-Brunswick. Si la transmission communautaire devient un problème au Nouveau-Brunswick et que la province doit revenir à la phase rouge ou orange du plan de rétablissement, des restrictions concernant les personnes de soutien désignées et les visites à l'extérieur des établissements pourraient à nouveau être nécessaires. Cette direction pourrait également être donnée par la Santé publique.

Sincères salutations,

Le Groupe de travail sur la pandémie,

Attachements / pièces jointes

Designated Support Person

To maintain a person-centered approach, including psychosocial and cultural aspects of holistic wellness, residents will now be permitted to re-introduce a designated support person. The designated support person is deemed essential to maintaining the resident’s mental and physical health, while retaining necessary safety precautions. Operators should not unreasonably deny entry to designated support persons, however, implementation of this guideline may vary from facility to facility based on operational ability to safely support these visits.

Designated Support Person: person identified by the resident or substitute decision maker as an important support. May be a family member, friend, companion, support worker, power of attorney/trustee, agent, legal guardian, or any other person identified by the resident or substitute decision maker.

Important Note

These guidelines are to be used in facilities currently located in **Yellow Phase** of provincial recovery. If Public Health has determined that the risk level for the region, or province has increased, and there is a need for stricter visitation measures, guidelines will be adjusted, and Public Health recommendations will take precedence over this document.

The following individuals are **prohibited** from entering the facility:

- Individuals who answer **yes**, to any of the screening questions.
- Individuals who have symptoms or feeling unwell.
- Individuals who are on self-isolation as per relevant Public Health directives
- Individuals who have had close contact with confirmed case of COVID-19 in past 14 days.
- Individuals who have had close contact with someone awaiting test results for COVID-19.
- Individuals who have travelled outside the Atlantic Provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador) in the past 14 days.

Selection

Up to two (2) individuals per resident may be selected to be a **designated support person**.

- May identify a temporary replacement if a designated support person is unable to perform their role for a period of time (e.g. self-isolation, out of town, or otherwise unable).
- It is possible for multiple residents to have the same designated support person.
- In case of dispute over selection of a designated support person, the operator may decline selection in order to prevent disruption of care to residents.

Access

- Designated support person may only have access to one facility.
- Designated support person should contact the facility to coordinate the time of their visits to ensure the operator has the opportunity to manage the number of people on site at any given time.
- Recommended that the designated support person establish a standing schedule (a schedule that is consistent week after week) based on the resident's needs and preferences.

Operator Requirements

An operator must:

1. Proactively and collaboratively work with the residents, or alternate decision makers to confirm up to two (2) designated support persons per resident, ensuring each resident has the level of support they desire and/or require.
2. Keep a list of all designated support persons.
3. Provide ID badge with name tag that indicates designated status.
4. Ensure all designated support persons are actively screened upon entry to facility and instruct persons to proceed directly to expected location of visit.
5. Maintain documentation.
6. Discuss and explain [safe visiting practices](#) and related facility policies to all residents and designated support persons and instruct all persons to adhere to them.
7. Ensure residents and designated support persons have or are provided with the required PPE (based on precaution required), have been trained to use, and have practised the appropriate use of the PPE.
8. Operators may use volunteers for specific tasks to help support the implementation of designated support persons (e.g. remote virtual/telephone training and education support to designated support persons, remote scheduling support etc.).
9. Operators are encouraged to develop an informal contract outlining designated support person responsibilities (see next page).

Designated Support Person Responsibilities

- All designated support persons must be instructed to:
 1. Undergo **active screening** at entry and self-check for symptoms throughout visit.
 2. Coordinate all visits with operator.
 3. Be educated and adhere to [safe visiting practices](#) and related facility policies.
 4. Only visit with the resident(s) they are supporting.
 5. Wear a mask continually indoors and outdoors.
 6. Maintain physical distancing when possible.
 7. Notify the operator of any symptoms that arise within 14 days of visiting a resident.
 8. It is imperative that all persons entering these settings:
 - ✓ Understand the risk of exposure to COVID-19 (for self and others);
 - ✓ Follow all related site policies and Public Health measures in place; and
 - ✓ Remain vigilant in protecting themselves and others both while on site as well as off site.
- **Entry may be refused if there is reason to believe an individual is not abiding by these responsibilities.**

Safe Visiting Practices (non-outbreak situations)

Hand Hygiene

- All persons visiting, including the residents, must wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, before, during as appropriate, and after all visits. Note: an operator may require the visiting person to provide their own hand sanitizer.

Use of PPE – General Practices

- All designated support persons are required to **wear a mask (community or medical)** continuously and be instructed how to put on and take off that mask and any other PPE that may be required. Note: masks may be provided by the operator if designated support person does not have their own).

Use of PPE to Enable Safe Physical Touch

- The risk of transmission of COVID-19 increases with close proximity. If a resident and their designated support person understands this and they wish to include physical touch in their visits, this may be done by the following additional guidance:
 - Immediately stop close contact with resident and inform staff if they are or become symptomatic during the visit.
 - Continuously wear a mask that covers the nose and mouth.
 - Though a resident does not need to also wear a mask, they may choose to do so.
 - Perform hand hygiene (hand washing and/or use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer) both before and after direct physical contact with the resident.

Residents on Isolation Precautions

- Residents who are suspect cases of COVID-19, who are on isolation precautions, will not be permitted to have any visitation.
- Residents who are on isolation precautions for other reasons (e.g. norovirus, or influenza) may have a designated support person visit, at the operator's discretion. Required PPE (based on precaution) must be worn by designated support person at all times.

Offsite Passes

To maintain a person-centered approach, including psychosocial and cultural aspects of holistic wellness, residents are to be permitted to overnight and weekend passes.

It is imperative that residents remain vigilant in their actions to protect themselves and others around them from COVID-19. Residents remain at extremely high risk of severe outcomes if they contract COVID-19.

Resident Offsite Pass: pass provided to resident to leave facility for overnight visits, these passes are different from **Leave of Absence**.

Operator Requirements

An operator must:

1. Collaboratively work with the residents, or alternate decision makers to accommodate resident offsite passes.
2. Maintain a record of contact information of persons resident is leaving with/or visiting while on pass.
3. **Actively screen** visitor accompanying resident on pass (if applicable).
4. **Actively screen** resident prior to leaving facility.
5. **Actively screen** resident upon return to facility.
6. Maintain documentation.
7. Review resident/visitor requirements (see next page) for safe offsite visitation.
8. Perform a Point of Care Risk Assessment upon resident's return to assess the risk and determine appropriate control measures.
9. Ensure all mobility aids, such as wheelchairs, canes and walkers will be cleaned upon the resident's return to the facility.
10. Operators are encouraged to develop an informal contract outlining resident/visitor requirements (see next page).

Resident/Visitor Requirements

- All residents leaving the facility must be instructed to:
 1. Coordinate all visits with operator.
 2. Undergo **active screening** upon leaving and returning to facility.
 3. Perform daily self-check for symptoms throughout duration of pass, and immediately notify facility of onset of symptoms.
 4. Be educated and adhere to all Public Health measures currently in place.
 5. Wear a mask at all times and ask that anyone with you also wear a mask.
 6. Maintain hand hygiene.
 7. Safe physical distancing to be maintained.
 8. Ensure **safe transportation**.
 9. Notify the operator of any symptoms that arise within 14 days of the visit.
- Passes may be refused if there is reason to believe an individual (resident or visitor) is not abiding by these responsibilities.
- Upon return, a risk assessment will be conducted to determine appropriate control measures, which may include isolation precautions.

Safe Transportation

Any transportation must be done as safely as possible. Operators must communicate the following Safe Transportation expectations to residents and families as appropriate. Residents, families and visitors are responsible for contributing both to their own safety and to the safety of the other residents and staff at the site to which the resident will return.

Transportation within private vehicles

(e.g., if resident drives self or when a visitor or family member picks up a resident)

- The resident or visitor/family member will ensure that the vehicle has been cleaned and disinfected prior to the resident entering, with focus on high touch surfaces (e.g. handles, steering wheel, window controls, armrests, seat belts, etc.)
- Driver and all passengers must be masked
- The driver and resident/passengers will sit as far apart as possible, minimizing the number of passengers in the vehicle (e.g. one driver with resident sitting as far away as possible)

Public Transit

(including city busses, handi-bus, etc.)

- Follow guidelines set out by municipal transit operators to maintain safety
- Maintain safe physical distancing
- Wear a mask
- Frequently use hand sanitizer and especially after having contact with high touch surfaces (e.g. armrests, doors and railings, handles, etc.)

Transportation within facility operated vehicles

(shuttle buses, vans, etc.)

- Ensure vehicle has been cleaned and disinfected prior to residents entering, with a focus on high touch surfaces (e.g. handles, steering wheel, window controls, armrests, seat belts, etc.)
- The driver and passengers must be masked (residents, staff, driver)
- Sit as far apart as possible, minimizing the number of passengers in the vehicle
- Frequently use hand sanitizer and especially after having contact with high touch surfaces (e.g. armrests, vehicle doors and handles, etc.)