



Committee Report

To:	Chair and Members of the Long Term Care Committee of Management
Committee Date:	September 14, 2021
Subject / Report No:	LTCR-CM-19-21
Title:	LTC COVID-19 Update
Prepared by:	Jennifer Cornell, Director of Long Term Care
Reviewed by:	Kim Wingrove, Chief Administrative Officer
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	Adopted as presented and endorsed by County Council CC72-21

Recommendation

1. That report LTCR-CM-19-21 regarding a Long-Term Care COVID-19 Status Update be received for information.

Executive Summary

Over the past two months, the province moved into Stage 2 on June 30th and Stage 3 on July 16th. On July 7th, easing of restrictions for long term care homes came into effect related to visiting, absences, personal care services and cohorting of residents. As we anxiously awaited direction for stage 3 opening, we were cautious of our approach due to the prevalence of the Delta variant in our area and the stage 3 rollout was delayed until August 5th. Our three care communities continue to be vigilant to ensure all measures are in place to keep our residents, families, and team members safe.

Updates

New Directives

All the efforts over the past 18 months have contributed to the changes we have seen over the last two months; we have received many Stage 2 & 3 updates that were implemented to improve the quality of life for our residents.

On June 29th we received the following easing of restrictions that would be in effect as of July 7th:

- The limit of two designated caregivers per resident is removed. Processes to designate persons as caregivers continue to be in place.
- For outdoor visits with a long-term care home resident, up to 10 people at a time are allowed.
- All residents may have up to 2 general visitors and 2 caregivers at a time for an indoor visit.
- Personal care services, such as those provided by hairdressers/barbers, are permitted.
- Cohorting of residents can be relaxed during outdoor activities.

A [Virtual Family Meeting](#) was held on July 6th to answer any questions or concerns families may have.

On July 14th we received guidelines related to Stage 3 Re-opening which would be in effect on July 16th. After discussions with Public Health we were directed to remain with stage 2 guidelines with modifications due to the Delta variant cases in our area.

- Up to 10 people at a time can come for an outdoor visit with a long-term care home resident. (Masks are still required for all outdoor visits).
- All residents may have up to 2 general visitors and 2 caregivers at a time for an indoor visiting station. (Indoor visitors are required to undergo rapid antigen testing upon arrival).
- Eyewear protection will continue for team members and partially and non-immunized indoor visitors when 2m physical distancing is not maintained (until 80% vaccine rate is achieved in staff as per Public Health).
- Short term social and temporary leaves remain for fully immunized residents only.
- Residents daily screening will be reduced to once a day.
- Partially and non-immunized individuals will continue to follow surveillance testing 2-3 times a week.

A [Virtual Family Meeting](#) was held on July 22nd to provide clarification of our current processes and discuss next steps.

On August 4th, Grey Bruce Public Health announced that Grey Bruce communities would implement full provincial stage 3 guidelines which included expanding our indoor visiting to in room visits. Effective August 6th our care communities implemented the following:

- Fully immunized staff and visitors may accompany fully immunized residents for meals.
- Allowing activities such as karaoke, singing, and dancing.
- Permitting all residents to go on pre-arranged day and overnight absences regardless of immunization status.
- Enabling the resumption of off-site group excursions for residents.
- Eye Protection is only required based on Point of Care Risk Assessment for essential visitors and team members.

Indoor Visiting Guidelines:

- **Fully Immunized visitors** may visit residents within the home, including resident's room. These visits no longer require a scheduled booking.

- The number of visitors in each room is not limited, however we ask that visitor capacity within resident's room does not exceed the ability to maintain 2m of physical distance from other visitors and residents.
- Proof of immunization is required.
- **Partially or non-immunized visitors** may visit at our indoor visiting station, these visits must be scheduled through our online booking tool.
- Surveillance Testing is required for partially and non-immunized visitors.
- It is recommended that partially or non-immunized children visit at indoor station unless other arrangements have been made with the care community.

Surveillance Testing

As part of the modified ease of restrictions we were able to implement the surveillance testing exemption for fully immunized individuals effective July 19th.

- **Fully immunized = 2 doses + 14 days**
 - **Proof of immunization** is now required.

The care communities' surveillance testing teams continue to test partially and non-immunized individuals 2-3 times a week and we are testing a combined average of 400 rapid antigen tests weekly. In addition, any symptomatic resident and staff member is also assessed and swabbed as appropriate for COVID as part of early detection surveillance.

IPAC Strategies

On July 30th eyewear protection was removed as part of the daily PPE for Lee Manor and Grey Gables as they had reached 80% vaccination rate. Rockwood Terrace removed their eyewear protection as of August 6th based on Grey Bruce Public Health direction and they have since surpassed the 80% staff vaccination rate.

On August 9th, Grey Bruce Public Health released an update related to eyewear protection and personal services for long term care.

- Hairdressers must have mask **and** Eye protection.
 - (regardless of the 80% immunization rate)
- Hairdryers can only be used if all clients are wearing mask
 - in addition to operator wearing mask and eye protection.
- No services if in LTC outbreak

Infection Prevention & Control Audits are completed monthly at each location, as part of our preparation planning for the fourth wave and the upcoming influenza season we have asked that Public Health complete in-house audits with our IPAC leads, and a Fall Preparation checklist is also being completed by each of the care communities "to assess pandemic preparedness, inform outbreak response planning, and prepare for potential future waves of COVID-19 as well as flu season.

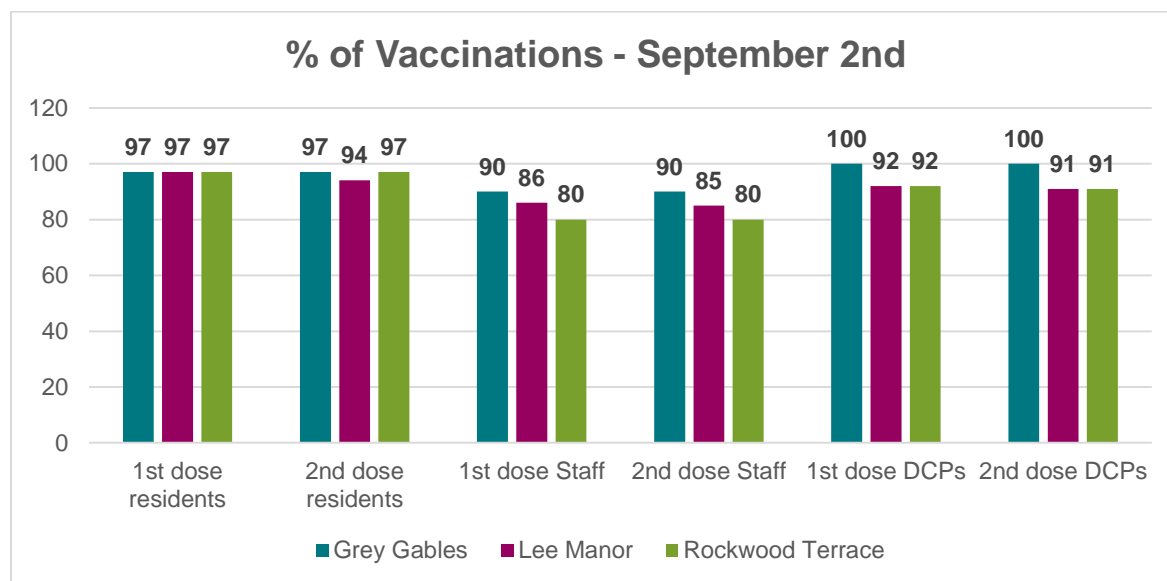
Vaccination

Our three care communities released the Immunization policy which came into effect on July 1st. Three options were provided, and team members have completed the required education which included a 1:1 session to provide additional information for decision making.

The immunization policy will require all persons to select one of the following options:

1. provide proof of **vaccination** against COVID-19; or
2. provide written proof of **a medical reason** for not being vaccinated against COVID-19; or
3. completion of a COVID-19 vaccination **educational program**

Our current COVID vaccination rates are:



On August 23rd we received updated information related to administering a third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine to long term care residents. Residents of LTC homes will be eligible to receive their third dose at least five months following their second dose. Our clinical teams are working closely with Public Health to arrange the dates for vaccine administration. Documents included in the communication were the [MLTC Memo](#) and a [FAQ](#) document.

DCP Program

August marked a milestone for our Designated Care Partners (DCP) Program as we celebrated the one-year anniversary. To recognize their commitment and efforts over the past year we dedicated the week of August 23rd as our Appreciation Week for DCPs. A [DCP virtual meeting](#) was held on August 19th and the Resident Family Services Manager along with the Director of Long Term Care met with the DCPs to express our gratitude and reflect on the past year. A [thank you video](#) was part of the celebration along with Colour It Thank You Cards, and Mill Creek chocolate stamped with the Grey County logo.

In July 2021, Kate Ducak and Christine Sheppard, Gerontologist consultants released their final [Evaluation Report](#) for our DCP program. The data collected from our DCP experience surveys were highlighted and examined the perceptions and benefits of the program and how best to support DCPs during COVID-19 and beyond. This report was also shared with the DCPs during appreciation week.

Staffing

The Essential Skills Supportive Care micro-certification program with the YMCA and Georgian College is going well with additional sessions scheduled for September and October. Several of our Care Support Assistants have completed the education and found it to be very beneficial. We continue to include this educational opportunity during all stages of recruitment.

Gates College reached out to our organization regarding the tuition free and paid placements for all PSW students. Our HR Generalist immediately reached out to our Care Support Assistants (CSA) and 5 team members have taken advantage of this opportunity.

A Referral Bonus Program policy is currently under review for existing staff to refer other candidates for hard to recruit roles in our LTC Homes. Grey Gables is planning to host a job fair in the upcoming month to promote the Care Community and the BSTU. We have a few CSAs who are returning to Lee Manor as PSW's in the fall months which is a great "grow our own" success.

As our students head back to school, we have included a Student Exit Survey as part of their leave to gain feedback on their overall experience this summer. We continue to recruit for Registered Nurses, Registered Practical Nurses, Personal Support Workers and Care Support Assistants.

Funding

On August 23rd, the Ontario government announced the extension to the temporary wage increase for PSWs until October 31st, 2021. Payment allocations continue to be made in regular installments to long term care homes based on the number of beds per home.

On August 27th, the Ministry of Long-Term Care announced that they will be providing a 1.5% increase in the level-of-care base funding in the 2021-2022 funding year (effective April 1, 2021). The 2021 budget includes a 1.5% increase (a total of \$245,000 for the three homes) for the Global Level of Care effective April 1, 2021 so the funding increase is consistent with what was budgeted.

On August 27th, additional COVID-19 funding was announced as part of the Ministry of Long-Term Care's ongoing effort to assist with prevention and containment efforts. This includes a one-time funding adjustment to address a portion of the funding shortfall reported by long-term care homes from April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021. Long-term care homes that report spending exceeding their allocation will be reimbursed up to the lesser of \$2,600 per bed or the amount that equates to the reported shortfall. Each home will be reimbursed a portion of the funding shortfall which represents the difference between incremental funding allocated and the actual incremental expenses incurred for prevention and containment efforts as reported in the 2020-2021 Final COVID-19 Incremental Expenditure Report from April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021.

In addition to the funding adjustment, funds will be flowed starting in September 2021 to support prevention and containment funding efforts for the period between July 2021 and March 2022. The Ministry anticipates long-term care home prevention and containment expenses to decline over time. As a result, prevention and containment funding will gradually wind down over the course of 2021-2022.

Every licensee will receive baseline funding of \$10,000 per month with:

- An additional \$600 per bed per month from July to September 2021
- An additional \$250 per bed per month from October to December 2021
- An additional \$150 per bed per month from January to March 2022.

Under this new funding model, Grey Gables will receive \$49,600 per month for July 2021 to September 2021, \$26,500 from October 2021 to December 2021 and \$19,900 from January 2022 to March 2022. Grey Gables is also eligible for a maximum of \$165,400 in reimbursement of funding shortfall.

Lee Manor will receive \$100,000 per month for July 2021 to September 2021, \$47,500 from October 2021 to December 2021 and \$32,500 from January 2022 to March 2022. Lee Manor is also eligible for a maximum of \$86,400 in reimbursement of funding shortfall.

Rockwood Terrace will receive \$70,000 per month for July 2021 to September 2021, \$35,000 from October 2021 to December 2021 and \$25,000 from January 2022 to March 2022. Rockwood Terrace is also eligible for a maximum of \$13,900 in reimbursement of funding shortfall.

Partnerships

Work continues with partnerships at both regional and local levels. The Grey Bruce Long Term Care Committee and healthcare partners meet regularly. The long-term care homes attend the Public Health led meetings every two weeks. Regular meetings continue with the Southwest Region Pandemic Planning, Wave 2 Response and the Grey Bruce Integrated Health Coalition, these groups play a critical role in ongoing pandemic planning and response.

Going forward work continues on outbreak strategies, implementing new resources, managing and monitoring and ordering weekly PPE supplies to maintain a minimum 8-week supply.

We continue to be thankful for the support from the CAO, Senior Management team and the staff in all departments, we recognize that we are in this together as we Colour It for our residents, families, staff, and communities.

Appendices and Attachments

- [Minister's Directive on Surveillance Testing June 30, 2021](#)
- [Long-Term Care Visitor, Absences & Social Gatherings Snapshot Effective July 7, 2021](#)
- [MTLC Pandemic Response FAQs-June 29, 2021](#)
- [Long Term Care Visitor, Absences & Social Gatherings Snapshot July 13, 2021](#)
- [Directive #3 COVID-19 Guidance Documents FAQs July 13, 2021](#)
- [Grey Bruce Public Health Media Release August 4, 2021](#)
- [Minister's Letter - COVID-19 Prevention and Containment Funding for 2021-22 – August 27, 2021](#)
- [ADM Letter - COVID-19 Prevention and Containment Funding for 2021-22 – August 27, 2021](#)
- [LOC Per Diem Occupancy and Acuity-Adjustment Funding Policy \(EN\)](#)

- [Level of Care Summary 2021-22 \(EN\)](#)