



Committee Report

To:	Chair and Members of the Long Term Care Committee of Management
Committee Date:	November 23, 2021
Subject / Report No:	LTCR-CM-23-21
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:	

Recommendation

1. **That report LTCR-CM-23-21 regarding a Long-Term Care COVID-19 Status Update be received for information.**

Executive Summary

The fall season often brings an increased prevalence of colds and influenza. In September two of our care communities, Lee Manor and Rockwood Terrace experienced respiratory outbreaks identified as the Rhinovirus agent. Our outbreak management teams utilized enhanced infection prevention measures to keep our residents, families, and team members safe and reduced the risk of spread. Our three care communities continue to be vigilant and monitor and assess our infection prevention and control protocols and strategies to ensure early detection is identified.

Updates

Vaccination

The province, including the Chief Medical Officer of Health, strongly encouraged all residents in homes to take advantage of the third dose of COVID-19 vaccine that is available to all residents to maximize protection from COVID-19. Our clinical teams worked with Public Health to administer over 240 COVID-19 third dose to residents that have consented.

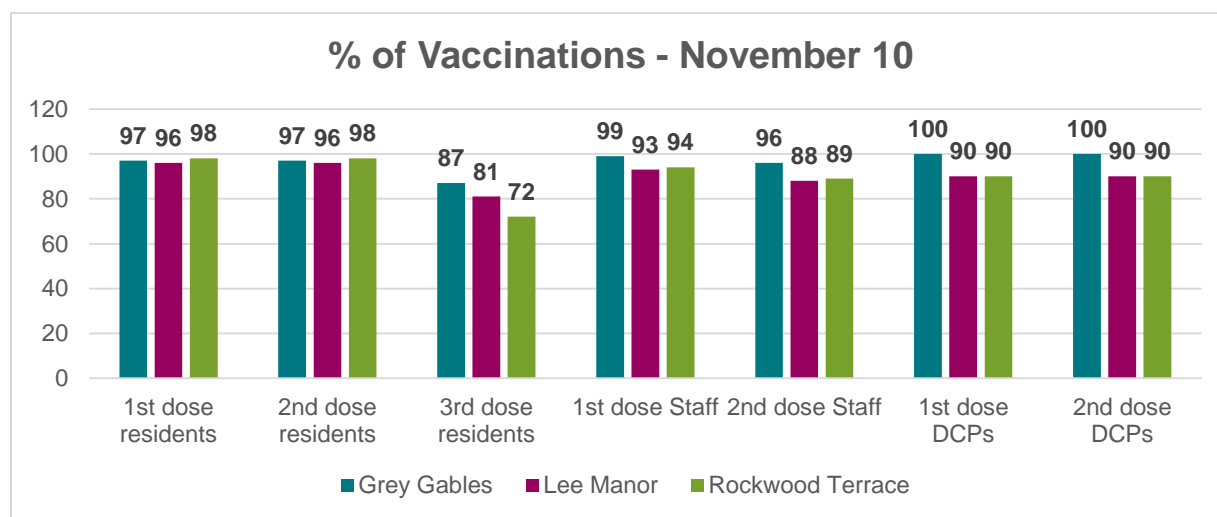
On November 3rd, The Chief Medical Officer announced the new roll out for boosters and as of November 6, 2021, boosters will be made available to additional groups of high-risk individuals if at least 6 months have passed since their last dose. This booster dose is recommended for these groups to provide an extra layer of protection against COVID-19 and is currently available to seniors living in LTC and certain congregate settings. Based on the recommendations made

by the Chief Medical Officer of Health and in alignment with the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI), the following eligible populations include:

- Individuals aged 70 and over (born in 1951 or earlier)
- Health care workers and designated essential caregivers in congregate settings (including long-term care home and retirement home staff and designated caregivers)
- Individuals who received a complete series of a viral vector vaccine (two doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine or one dose of the Janssen vaccine)
- First Nation, Inuit and Métis adults and their non-Indigenous household members

Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination has been discussed at many regional and local tables over the past two months and our Care Communities were proactive and implemented mandatory COVID-19 immunization as a condition of employment for all new hires including team members, agency, students, and volunteers effective September 15th. On October 1st the Ministry released an updated [Directive](#) that outlined the requirements for mandatory vaccination for all long term care homes. Mandatory vaccination applies to all staff, students, supports workers and volunteers. Our leadership teams quickly contacted all unvaccinated team members to discuss next steps to ensure full compliance.

Our current COVID vaccination rates are:



Surveillance Testing

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 200 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. This testing was proven effective at Rockwood Terrace when a staff member who immediately accessed surveillance testing with the onset of symptoms tested positive for COVID-19. Due to early detection, the staff member was directed to self-isolate and there was no further action required at the home.

To ensure results are timely and to have the least impact on our staffing levels, our Medical Directors at each location agreed to update the Medical Directive to include onsite swabbing of team members and family members.

The updated COVID-19 Immunization directive instructs all long term care homes to provide random surveillance testing for fully vaccinated individuals through rapid antigen testing. The new requirement of random surveillance testing for fully immunized individuals will be in effect as of October 15th, 2021 and includes the following guidelines:

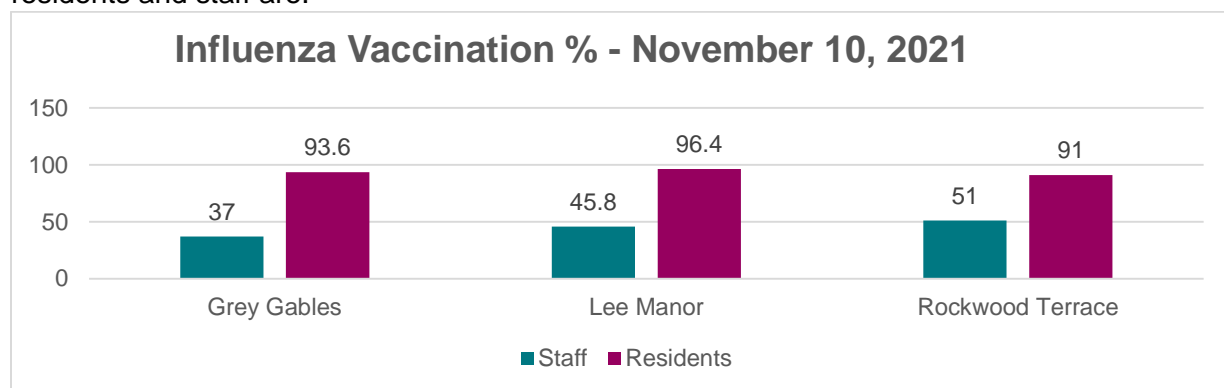
- Weekly
- Random
- Different shifts
- Must be more than one (1) swab taken during the random testing date
- Rapid Antigen swab test
- Includes Staff, Caregivers (DCP), Student Placements and Volunteers
- Staff, Caregivers (DCP), Student Placement and Volunteers with valid medical exemption will follow regular schedule

IPAC Strategies

Infection Prevention & Control Audits are completed monthly at each location, and as part of our fall preparedness we invited Public Health to visit and complete IPAC audits as well. Recommendations received from Public Health were reviewed and actions completed as applicable to enhance our IPAC programs and practices. IPAC leads are also working to support additional audits with engaging more champions including the CSA audit role. Sessions were also arranged for our environmental managers at each care communities to review with the public health considerations for environmental cleaners to support purchase and practices for IPAC. Areas included efficacy of the disinfectant, ease of use, compatibility with items and surfaces, safe for use, and cost and environmental impact.

Our Clinical Specialist provided information sessions and outbreak management supports to all three care communities including an Outbreak Management Tabletop session at Rockwood Terrace as part of our ongoing IPAC education and preparation of the influenza season.

Influenza vaccination clinics were held in October for residents, and November clinics are scheduled for staff, and Designated Care Partners. Our current influenza immunization rates for residents and staff are:



To improve our isolation measures, our three care communities trialed new isolation carts. The feedback from staff has been positive and aligns with the reviews received from other long term care homes that are currently using this style of isolation cart.

On October 27th the Ministry released information related to Proactive Inspections Program. Over the next two years, the Ministry aims to recruit 156 long term care inspectors and 37 support staff which will double the current number. It is anticipated that there will be a ratio of one inspector for every two homes.

Designated Care Partner Program

Advantage Ontario held their Annual Awards celebration in September and Grey County's Designated Care Partner (DCP) Program received an honourable mention for the Innovation and Excellence Award for Supporting Seniors. This category recognized an innovative program or technique in the provision of care or services for seniors and we are pleased that our program has been a part of making change across the province.

Our DCPs have played an essential role within our care communities over the past 13 months, and we value their feedback. For a second year in a row the Annual Resident and Family Experience Surveys will include questions related to this role. The surveys were released on November 5th and we will provide results in the new year.

A [virtual family meeting](#) was held on November 9th updates were provided related to Mandatory Vaccine policy, COVID-19 third dose boosters, Influenza vaccine and Direct Care funding.

Funding

On September 16th, Ontario Health (West) informed our care communities that one-time funding to support infection prevention and control (IPAC) personnel capacity including retaining IPAC professionals would be provided to each home. Grey Gables will receive an allocation of \$25,124, Lee Manor will receive \$57,099 and Rockwood Terrace will receive \$38,066. This funding will be used to support IPAC capacity in the homes, including procurement, development and/or delivery of IPAC related training for the period April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022.

The PSW wage enhancement extension was set to expire on October 31st. On October 28th the Ontario government announced that it will extend the temporary wage enhancement for personal support workers and direct support workers until March 31, 2022. This funding provides \$3 per hour for approximately 50,000 eligible personal support workers in long-term care. Direct funding allocations are flowed to homes on a regular basis.

New funding announced on October 6th and a follow up memo was received on October 15th that outlined the Ministry's investment to long term care.

- Up to \$227,187,500 in base funding this fiscal year to increase the average hours of direct care provided by registered nurses, registered practical nurses, and personal support workers will increase the daily average of two hours and 45 minutes per resident, per day (based on 2018 data) to an average of three hours per resident, per day by March 2022.

- Up to \$42,802,600 in base funding for this fiscal year to increase the average worked hours by allied health care professionals such as physiotherapist and social workers from the current daily average of 30 minutes (based on 2018 data) to an average of 33 minutes per resident, per day.
- Up to \$10 million in annual base funding to support education and training of staff in long term care homes through the Supporting Professional Growth Fund.
- The government has further committed to an investment of \$673 million, \$1.25 billion, and \$1.821 billion for staffing increases in the 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25 fiscal years, respectively.

Information on specific home allocations, as well as the proposed use of this funding per home in the 2022 budget, is provided in [LTCR-CM-27-21 2022 Proposed Long Term Care Budgets](#).

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.

Recently, the Director of LTC was invited to join the Strategic Long Term Care Advisory Table. The goal is to bring together a broad range of expertise and diverse perspectives on long-term care, as one critical component of the seniors' services landscape.

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 Letter RRE: Proactive Inspections Program](#)
- [MLTC News Release Ontario Launching New and Improved Inspections Program for LTC](#)
- [Grey Gables IPAC Personnel & Training Funding Letter](#)
- [Lee Manor IPAC Personnel & Training Funding Letter](#)
- [Rockwood Terrace IPAC Personnel & Training Funding Letter](#)
- [News Release - Ontario Extending Temporary Wage Enhancement for Personal Support Workers](#)
- [Ontario Taking Action to Immediately Increase Staffing in LTC News Release](#)
- [Memo form ADMs October 15 2021](#)
- [Minister's Letter October 15 2021](#)
- [LTC Staffing Increase Funding Policy](#)
- [Supporting Professional Growth Funding Policy](#)