

# PROVINCIAL LONG-TERM CARE HOME **COVID-19 Outbreak Standard Operating Procedures**

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December 17, 2020

# LONG-TERM CARE HOMES

## Standard Operating Procedures for COVID-19 Outbreak Management

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As the COVID19 outbreak continues to evolve locally and globally, Ontario is taking further action in Long-Term Care (LTC) Homes to ensure the province's healthcare system is prepared to protect the health and wellbeing of Ontarians, especially our most vulnerable older persons.

Long-Term Care Homes have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This guideline outlines standard operating procedures to support LTC Homes with preparedness planning, case identification, and implementation of their outbreak plan, to prevent and manage an outbreak, and aligns with Directive #3 for Long-Term Care Homes under the *Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007*.

This guide is not intended to replace formal Ministry, public health or other relevant direction, guidance or statutory requirements.

### **Being Prepared\*** –Assumptions for LTC Homes Prior to the Outbreak

- Ready-to-implement Outbreak Management Plans (e.g., staffing contingency plan, including surge capacity)
- Proactive ongoing screening and monitoring of residents, staff, and essential caregivers to identify COVID-19 RISK\*\* (e.g., daily screening, weekly/bi-weekly testing strategy, as per Ministry directive and policy)
- Robust training and auditing on IPAC protocols, including cohort contingency planning, and access to personal protective equipment
- Established communication systems with families and local partners
- Vigilant resident monitoring by the medical director, physicians/nurse practitioners, and staff for early identification of COVID-19 sign/symptoms
- Established partnerships at the local level (hospital, Ontario Health Region, public health, and ministry)
- Readiness that if ONE resident/staff is identified with COVID-19 RISK\*\*, Outbreak Management Standard Operating Procedures are initiated

\* Please see Appendix A for a full list of statutory outbreak prevention and control actions required by LTC homes.

\*\* COVID-19 RISK – residents, staff, essential caregivers experiencing signs/symptoms or potential exposure to suspected/confirmed cases.

STEP #	AREA	TIMELINE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
0.	Outbreak Planning and Preparation	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outbreak Management Plan, developed in collaboration with Public Health Unit (PHU), ready to implement (includes staffing contingency plan, resident transfer scenarios with local partners, and daily casereporting)</li> </ul>	LTC Home
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactive monitoring and screening of residents, staff, and essential caregivers for COVID-19 risk</li> <li>• Regular weekly/bi-weekly COVID-19 testing for staff and visitors, as per Ministry direction</li> <li>• Ongoing training and auditing on IPAC protocols, including cohort contingency planning, and access to personal protective equipment</li> <li>• Ensure caregivers are re/trained in PPE techniques</li> <li>• Ensure clinical oversight is in place</li> <li>• Assess residents for transfer, do-not-resuscitate preferences</li> <li>• Maintain accurate records of staff, caregivers, visitors, and families</li> </ul>	LTC Home
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify roles and responsibilities for local partners (OH Regions, IPAC Hubs, LHINs) in the COVID-19 Outbreak Management Team*</li> <li>• Convene and coordinate regional/local partnership tables</li> <li>• Regularly monitor key indicators as part of the risk identification and collaboration processes</li> </ul>	OH Regions
1.	Issue Identification and Early Management	Within first 24 hours of a suspected case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resident/staff identified with COVID-19 signs/symptoms or potential exposure to suspected/confirmed case of COVID-19</li> <li>• Immediately implement enhanced IPAC measures, based on current Public Health Ontario practices and procedures, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Droplet/Contact precautions initiated for residents with signs/symptoms of COVID-19 or potential exposure to suspected/confirmed case</li> <li>- Implement staff and resident co-horting and isolation plan using designated spaces, as necessary; and providing direction on risk factor mitigation strategies, both inside and outside of the home</li> <li>- Mobilization of Environmental Services supports</li> <li>- Implement twice daily assessment and screening protocols for all residents</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Testing initiated for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Suspected resident and/or staff; and</li> <li>- Other residents/staff with close contact, and anyone else designated high-risk, in accordance with public health testing guidelines</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Inform PHU, the Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC), and IPAC Hub</li> <li>• Immediate escalation to LTC Home corporate office with identified potential support needs, if applicable</li> </ul>	LTC Home
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate third-party IPAC assessments</li> </ul>	Most Responsible Organization (MRO) to be identified locally

STEP #	AREA	TIMELINE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
2.	Communication and Notification of Confirmed Case	Triggered with Confirmed Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dependent on which party receives initial notification of positive results;               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If PHU, notify LTCHs; or</li> <li>- If LTC, report to PHU and notify MLTC; and OH Region, as applicable</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	PHU or LTC Home
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Declare an outbreak</li> <li>• Investigate and manage any persons under investigation, confirmed cases, and/or outbreaks in the home</li> <li>• Provide direction on outbreak control measures to be implemented</li> <li>• Provide support for case and contact/outbreak management</li> <li>• Lead management of the outbreak in collaboration with LTCH, local partners, and MLTC</li> <li>• Deploy PHU inspections; may utilize powers under Section 22 or Section 13 of the <i>Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA)</i> to address communicable disease prevention/control issues e.g. enforce IPAC protocols</li> </ul>	PHU
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement communication plan, including notification to residents; families, regarding outbreak protocol and visiting policies; staff, including daily emails on key updates; and acute care hospitals regarding possible transfers</li> <li>• Provide information/lists of staff, visitors, residents, including those co-horted/isolated to PHU for contact tracing and safety measures</li> <li>• Restrict visits, admissions/re-admissions (as per Ministry policies)</li> </ul>	LTC Home
3.	Response Planning	Within 48 hours of confirmed case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activate COVID-19 Outbreak Management Team* (See Section 0) after outbreak is declared by PHU</li> <li>• Facilitate regional/community level supports to home based on available capacity at the local/regional level</li> </ul>	OH Regions
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commencement of regular touchpoint calls between home, MLTC, PHU, IPAC Hub, OH Regions, and hospital partners</li> </ul>	MRO to be identified locally
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MLTC inspections initiated/deployed, as available</li> <li>• Monitor daily statistics for outbreak management</li> <li>• Provide regulatory oversight of the emergency response to determine policy instruments that may need to be actioned (e.g., mandatory management order, voluntary management contract)</li> </ul>	MLTC
4.	Outbreak Management	Within 48-72 hours of confirmed case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact tracing, follow up, and case reporting</li> <li>• Coordinate home outbreak testing strategy in accordance with latest guidance/directive</li> </ul>	PHU
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure ongoing co-horting of residents and staff</li> <li>• Subsequent testing, as required based on PHU risk assessment</li> </ul>	LTC Home
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of Outbreak Risk and external IPAC assessments</li> <li>• IPAC extender supports deployed, as needed</li> </ul>	MRO to be identified locally (PHU, IPAC Hubs and MLTC) OH Regions
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiation of LTCH's on-going outbreak management processes (work occurring beyond scope of this document)</li> </ul>	LTC Home in collaboration with MLTC, PHU, IPAC Hubs, Hospitals and OH Regions
5.	Oversight	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring of recovery efforts</li> </ul>	MLTC LTC Corporate offices

# Appendix A: General Long-Term Care Home Requirements for Outbreak Prevention and Control

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Under the *Long-Term Care Homes Act* (LTCHA) and its Regulations, licensees are required to:

- Ensure a safe and secure environment for residents (s. 5, LTCHA)
- Effectively prevent and manage outbreaks, including ensuring that there is:
  - An infection prevention and control program for a long-term care home (s. 86, LTCHA)
  - An outbreak management system for detecting, managing, and controlling infectious disease outbreaks, including defined staff responsibilities, reporting protocols based on requirements under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, communication plans, and protocols for receiving and responding to health alerts
  - A written plan for responding to infectious disease outbreaks (s. 229 of O. Reg. 79)
- Ensure that emergency plans are in place for the home that comply with the regulations, including:
  - Measures for dealing with emergencies
  - Procedures for evacuating and relocating the residents, and evacuating staff and others in case of an emergency (s. 230 of O. Reg. 79/10)
- Ensure there is a staffing plan for its organized program of nursing services and organized program of personal support services (s. 31 of O. Reg. 79/10)
- Follow all other Ministry of Health and Ministry of Long-Term Care direction, guidance related to prevention and management of COVID-19 pandemic