

April 30, 2020



Dear Good Samaritan families,

On April 29, 2020, the Alberta Chief Medical Officer of Health issued an order indicating that, where feasible, residents can enjoy outdoor visits with up to two other individuals (one being the designated essential visitor). These new orders offer the opportunity for our site to open up minimal and controlled visitation for our residents. As our goal is to maintain a quality of life, we are also reminded that during this public health emergency we need to do our best to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our residents, employees, and families.

Please note, the order is not meant to open up visitation in our care homes as the residents we care for are the most vulnerable age group for severe outcomes from COVID-19. We must remain vigilant and maintain all precautions.

The leadership teams at our care homes are working to determine how we will coordinate outdoor visits to minimize the risk of transmission, so please be patient with us. We must balance the desire for outdoor visits with the safety and health of all residents and employees. There are several stipulations for outdoor visits that are important for you to know:

- Visits must be requested by the designated essential visitor or the resident (note: a designated essential visitor is someone who is required to assist in carrying out the quality of life or care related activities that staff are unable to provide);
- Visits must be pre-arranged and scheduled with the care homes;
- Visits can have a maximum of three people – the resident, the person deemed a designated essential visitor, and one other;
- Outdoor visits must practice social distancing (everyone must be a minimum of six feet away from one another);
- Everyone involved with outdoor visits must wear masks continuously;
- Visitors are responsible for bringing their own masks;
- Visitors must remain outside and cannot enter the building;
- A resident who is in isolation cannot participate in outdoor visits;
- Visits are dependent on staff availability;

- If the outdoor space can only be accessed from within the building, it is only the essential visitor who will be allowed. The essential visitor will need to undergo complete screening and instruction on the proper use of personal protective equipment; and
- Visitors will not be permitted if we have a COVID-19 or any other outbreak.

We know that this has undoubtedly been a very difficult time for you as you've been unable to visit in person, however, it will be important for you, as families, to assess the benefit of the outdoor visits for your loved one and yourselves in terms of physical health, safety, and emotional wellbeing.

If you would like to schedule an outdoor visit, please contact the care home directly. Again, as per the Chief Medical Officer of Health's order, we ask that requests for visits be made by the resident or the designated essential visitor only. Thank you in advance for your patience as we work over the next couple of days to determine the process and staffing required to best facilitate outdoor visits. Once we understand the scheduling, distancing, and staffing requirements, we will be better able to assess requests. Please be aware that we may not be able to accommodate all initial visit requests, and ask for your flexibility to find dates and times that will work for everyone.

End of Life Visitation For Loved Ones

We will also continue to facilitate end of life visitation for loved ones. The latest Chief Medical Officer of Health order clarifies that visitation is permitted when a resident is within two weeks of end of life. While it is difficult to be precise about this timeframe, our clinical team will do their very best to assess each situation carefully and thoughtfully to allow visitors to have as much time as possible with their loved one. The new order indicates that:

- The designated essential visitor can enter the building and approve other family members, religious leaders, children, and friends to visit one at a time (only one visitor can be present in the building at a time). There are two exceptions listed below.
- The first exception is if the approved visitor is a child. In that instance, the child can be accompanied by their parent/guardian or the designated essential visitor;
- The second exception is if the room is large enough to accommodate a maximum of two visitors who can safely maintain two metres physical distance from each other;
- Visits must be pre-arranged and scheduled with the site;
- Visitors must wear masks and, if appropriate, additional personal protective equipment; and,
- Visitors must wash their hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer before entering and leaving the resident's room.

If you have any questions or concerns about any of this information, please reach out to the site manager at your loved ones care home, or email goodsaminfo@gss.org.

Stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Bonnici". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "M".

Michelle Bonnici
Interim President and CEO