

June 12, 2020



Dear Good Samaritan individuals and families,

As things continue to adjust throughout this pandemic, I wanted to reach out to you to provide you with an update. In the past few weeks, we have seen some changes as they relate to outdoor visiting and the opening up of the communities we live in. I know that this has raised many questions for you, and I hope to address some of them below.

Some of you have reached out and asked if individuals can go home with family for short periods without them having to isolate on return. At this time, if an individual leaves our group home overnight, they will have to isolate for 14 days upon their return. While individuals can leave, we continue to encourage that they do not do so unless considered a necessity. According to the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH), when an outing is solely for the purposes of maintaining physical or psychological health, safety/security, or wellbeing, it is considered a necessity. Some examples could be going to a medical appointment, for employment, or spending time outside. If an individual does want to leave for a short period of time, they are encouraged to wear a mask, have anyone they are with wear a mask, physically distance themselves, use hand sanitizer, and avoid visiting locations that have large groups of people.

It should also be noted that individuals are not required to isolate following medical appointments or hospital trips if they are not admitted. Everyone who comes into the group home will continue to be screened upon entry – including individuals who have chosen to leave for an outing. If they do not pass the screening upon return, they would be required to immediately self-isolate while testing is arranged.

We know that visiting and being outdoors is important for everyone's mental health, but it is also vital that we continue to follow the public health directives concerning outdoor visits. Here are some important reminders to keep in mind when arranging an **outdoor visit**:

- Visits can only be arranged with individuals who are NOT on isolation.
- An individual or their decision-maker must name a designated essential visitor.
- The designated essential visitor must arrange the visit with the group home.
- Visitors and individuals must wash or sanitize their hands before and after visits.
- Do not touch your face.
- Visitors must bring a mask and wear it at all times.
- Visitors and individuals must remain at least two metres apart. Exceptions may be made when pushing a wheelchair or talking to those with impaired hearing.
- At this time, no pets are allowed.
- Employees will screen individuals when they re-enter the home.
- No more than two people can visit an individual at one time (maximum group size of 3), and one of the people needs to be the designated essential visitor.

There is a high demand for outdoor visits at certain times, and we are only able to accommodate so many in order to meet the physical distancing and staffing requirements. Thank you for your patience and kindness as employees try to ensure everyone has the chance to visit. If you are not able to make it to a prearranged visit, we would ask that you let us know as soon possible so that we can offer the opportunity to someone else. If an outdoor visit isn't possible for you, please speak to the employees to learn more about the different ways you can connect, including virtual visits. Our well wishes tool is also available on our website (www.gss.org/well-wishes).

I want to reassure you that the care and happiness of the individuals at our group homes is of the utmost importance to us. If you have any concerns at all, please reach out so we can work through them together. While this is a challenging time for everyone, it is especially challenging for you and your loved ones. My commitment to you is that we will continue to provide quality care and service to our individuals while also following the public health orders to keep everyone safe.

Please be assured that if there should be any concern with an individual in our care, we will reach out to the primary contact to update them on the situation and provide more information. We know that not being able to visit inside the group home is difficult, and we want to do whatever we can to ensure you or your loved ones have the information needed to feel comfortable with the care provided at all times.

If you do not already, please follow us on social media (@goodsamaritanCA on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) to see some of the ways our employees are spreading fun and engaging with those we care for. Again, if you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the site manager at the care home or email goodsaminfo@gss.org. We will continue to provide updates to you as we receive direction from the respective authorities.

Stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Bonnici".

Michelle Bonnici B.A. LL.M
Interim President and CEO