

July 2, 2020



Dear Good Samaritan residents and families,

Earlier this week, the provincial government announced changes to begin to allow visitors to long-term care and assisted living homes across British Columbia.

I know that many of you are likely excited about this news, and for some, it may raise some concerns. I would like to reassure you that we are working with the respective health authorities to ensure that required safety plans and measures are in place before allowing designated visitors at our care homes.

Once measures are ready, the leadership team at your care home will reach out to you to provide you with more details on the new visitation process. We know that many people were pleased to hear the announcement and have already tried to visit, but I would like to ask for your patience as we take the necessary steps to keep everyone safe. Once visitation can begin, below is some important information for you to have:

- Under the new visitation guidelines developed by the Ministry of Health and the provincial health officer, residents will be able to visit with **one** designated family member or friend for the month of July.
- The government has indicated that they will reassess in August and the hope is to be able to expand this to include other family members or friends safely going forward. However, there may be a limit to the number of visitors at a given time.
- The ability to visit at each care home may vary, depending on the ability of each residence to safely apply the updated provincial guidelines.
- All visits must be booked in advance to allow them to be conducted safely. Please keep in mind that there will be limited space for visits, so we ask for your patience and understanding as our employees try to accommodate everyone's wishes.
- Visits are **not** allowed if there is an active COVID-19 outbreak at the care home.
- You will not be able to come and visit if you or the resident you are visiting are sick or have any COVID-19 symptoms.
- All visitors will be screened for signs and symptoms of illness, including COVID-19, before every visit.

- All visits will take place in specific "visiting areas," which will be organized by each care home.
- When you visit, you will need to bring a clean mask and wear it for the duration of your visit.

Some of you may also have questions about outings for residents in our care homes. At this time, the provincial health officer has recommended that residents of long-term care homes continue to limit outings to essential medical appointments only to reduce the potential risk of exposure to COVID-19 in the community. Assisted living residents are encouraged to follow public health guidance when going out into the community, including avoiding large gatherings, staying away from people who are ill, maintaining safe physical distance and wearing a mask when in enclosed spaces such as transit or stores.

We continue to encourage families and friends to stay in touch with residents virtually. If you would like more information, please reach out to the care home to learn more about the different ways you can connect. Our well wishes tool is also available to you on our website (www.gss.org/well-wishes) where loved ones can send a message and photos to those in our care.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the site manager at the care home or email goodsaminfo@gss.org. As I mentioned above, the leadership team at your care home will be in touch once the visitation safety plans are in place and visiting can begin. We will also continue to provide updates to you as we receive direction from the respective authorities.

Stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,



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