

August 2, 2020



Dear Good Samaritan Southgate Care Centre residents and families,

It is with a heavy heart that I advise you that we have now had 23 residents pass away at the care home. Any death resulting from this virus is one too many, and I want to express my sincere condolences to those families that have lost their loved one due to this outbreak. Please know that our Good Samaritan family is grieving with you and that chaplaincy support is currently available at the care home to any residents or family members that need someone to talk to.

Many of you have been reaching out and requesting more information. I would like you to know that we hear you, and are looking to provide you with whatever information you need. Please, continue to reach out to the care home, but you can also send non-specific health-related questions to goodsaminfo@gss.org, and we are happy to respond to you.

While these numbers continue to change daily and sometimes even more frequently, as of today, we have:

- Twenty-one residents who have tested positive on the second floor and twenty on the third floor. Two residents are hospitalized.
- We have had fifteen residents and eight employees recover.
- We currently have twenty-four employees who have tested positive.

Some of you have inquired as to how we are grouping residents to protect those who are not ill. As soon as a resident tests positive, they are moved into a different wing to reduce the risk of transmission and placed on precautions. If they had a roommate at the time they were determined to be positive, the roommate will be re-tested and also placed on precautions until results are known. As you know, Southgate Care Centre faces unique challenges as there are semi-private rooms. Our employees, in coordination with Alberta Health Services and Alberta Health, continue to work to cohort and group residents. If someone does become positive, the care home will contact the primary contact or legal health representative as soon as we get the result. As movement throughout the care home is carefully controlled, contact tracing is conducted to determine who else the positive person, whether a resident or an employee, may have come in contact with and those who have been in close contact are isolated and tested as necessary.

Residents are encouraged to stay in their room or wing for their own safety, and the doors to each wing are closed. Ill residents are not allowed to leave their area. As you can appreciate, it can be difficult for our residents living with dementia to understand the need for these restrictions. The employees in the care home are working closely with these residents to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

Healthy residents who are their own decision-makers are encouraged to stay in their rooms, but they are allowed to go outside to the backyard for fresh air or in some cases, a cigarette. This is permitted through the Chief Medical Officer of Health's Order. Residents who choose to go outside are reminded to perform hand hygiene and to wear a mask. Any person who leaves and enters the care home for any reason, including residents, are screened and have their temperature taken. If a resident were to fail the screening, they would be required to isolate in their room for 14 days. If an employee were to fail the screening, they would be sent home immediately and required to arrange testing and isolate. Contact tracing would be completed. When a resident returns inside, they are provided with the direction to return to their room or wing and not to stop and visit with anyone along the way.

There have been many inquiries about the source of the virus and how it got into the care home or how it was able to move to other floors. Unfortunately, that is a question we may never have an answer to. We know that the nature of this virus is that it is very contagious and that some people can have the virus and not show any signs or symptoms, and that is how it spreads. This is why it is so important to follow all public health guidelines. We will continue to work with Alberta Health Services to limit the spread of this virus further while ensuring the provision of care is met for each resident. We continue to follow all Public Health Orders and outbreak protocols, including employees wearing appropriate personal protective equipment and enhanced cleaning. As well, we are now testing residents and employees weekly in collaboration with Alberta Health Services.

We meet daily with Alberta Health Services, sometimes multiple times a day, and we are appreciative of their guidance and support. They have people in the care home actively providing support, including nurse practitioners, registered nurses, social workers, quality consultants, infection prevention and control practitioners, and other staff as needed. Our goals are the same, and that is to reduce the risk of transmission and to provide the best care that we can to the residents while supporting our employees. In addition to Alberta Health Services, we are always looking at other options for supplementing our staffing levels. In the past two weeks, we have significantly increased staffing levels. This had included bringing on additional housekeeping staff, health care aides, and nurses. We also have employees on-site whose focus is on ensuring employees are educated and reminded of how to put on and take

off personal protective equipment properly.

I would also like to report that we had a vendor on-site last week to install an external AC unit into the building. We continue to look into different ways that we can provide residents and employees with some relief, as we know wearing full personal protective equipment can make a person feel very hot. This has included having cool bottles of water and frozen treats available when appropriate, and we are ensuring residents are monitored and well hydrated.

I can assure you that together with Alberta Health Services, we have put in extra measures to care for any of our residents who already have or may become sick with COVID-19. Ensuring your loved one receives quality care is our main priority. The nurses and doctors taking care of the residents are very skilled in providing care and keeping the residents comfortable.

The care home is still experiencing high call volumes, and we want to thank you for your patience as our employees work to respond as quickly as they can to messages. As I mentioned at the beginning of my letter, you can continue to email goodsaminfo@gss.org if you have general questions about our COVID-19 response at the care home. If you have any questions about the health of your loved one, please contact Kelly Kontek, site manager, at 780-431-3840. You can also reach the care manager for each floor at the following number:

- First Floor, Eva Hart: (780) 431-3832
- Second Floor, Megan Jamieson: (780) 431-3842
- Third Floor, Thabith Nzuzu: (780) 431-3852

Please keep in mind that we are only able to share health information with a resident's primary contact or legal health representative. We are also not able to provide this information electronically (e.g. email) due to privacy concerns. I do commit to you that we will continue to provide you with updates as we work through this together.

Stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,



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