



November 26, 2020

Dear residents and loved ones of Good Samaritan Pembina Village,

I am happy to report that since my last letter to you, we now have seen a slight change in our COVID-19 numbers at the care home as follows:

- Ten active resident COVID-19 cases.
- **Eleven residents have recovered.**
- Four active employee COVID-19 cases.
- Nine employees have recovered.
- Sadly we have now had two residents pass away.

You can continue to see our most up-to-date case numbers by visiting <https://gss.org/covid-19-outbreak-disclosure/>.

For those residents who have recovered, the care home will be reaching out to you to let you know if they haven't already. The residents who are considered recovered will still be asked to stay in their rooms for their own protection. Extra housekeeping is on-site to assist with completing a terminal clean for each of the eleven rooms where residents have recovered.

Those residents that are not deemed recovered, and those that are asymptomatic, will remain on contact droplet precautions, meaning they will be isolated in their rooms and staff will continue to wear full personal protective equipment when entering their space or providing care.

We will be conducting another round of asymptomatic swabbing on November 30, 2020, for residents and employees. If any resident tests positive, their primary contact or legal health representative will be notified right away. Our hope is that with this next round of testing, we will have a clearer picture of the last site exposure, and that will give us a better idea of when the outbreak might be declared over. We will continue to share information with you as we learn more.

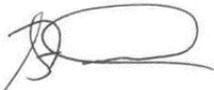
At this time, visitation is still limited to compassionate visits only until we are declared off of outbreak, so please continue to utilize the virtual visits. We know that Wi-Fi has been an issue, and we are working to rectify that so more visits can happen without any problems.

I would also like to thank everyone who was able to join our virtual meeting on Monday. I hope that you found it informative. If you were unable to attend, I have attached a document that captures what was said as well as all of the questions and answers from the session.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Laurie Brown, our site manager, by calling (780) 727-4441. If you call and we do not answer right away, please leave a message, and someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Fielding', with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

Scott Fielding
Vice President of Operations, Quality, and Clinical Supports



COVID-19 Family Conversation for Good Samaritan Pembina Village

November 23, 2020
Total Participants: 25

Opening Message from Dr. Katherine Chubbs, Good Samaritan President and Chief Executive Officer:

Hello everyone, thank you for taking the time to meet with us this evening and to learn more about our COVID-19 response at Good Samaritan Pembina Village.

Before we get started, I wanted to introduce myself a bit as this is the first town hall I am doing as the new President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of The Good Samaritan Society and Good Samaritan Canada. I've been with the organization since the beginning of November, and it's been a busy few weeks. I feel honoured to be a part of the Good Samaritan team and to support the work being done on our frontlines to care for our residents – your loved ones. I am a Registered Nurse and have worked in many areas that have given me a good background to support the COVID response at Good Samaritan. I have worked in a variety of clinical settings, including long term care. I also worked in roles such as infection prevention and control, as an educator, and in an occupational health and safety role.

Before we jump into the COVID-19 response at Good Samaritan Pembina Village, I wanted to take this opportunity to acknowledge the passing of one of our residents from COVID-19. I don't know if any of their family members are online with us this evening, but I wanted to express, on behalf of the entire organization, my condolences to them. While I know it won't ease your pain, please know that it is a tight-knit community at the care home, and our Good Samaritan family is grieving with you.

As you likely know, this is not the first COVID-19 outbreak that we have faced as an organization. Throughout the other outbreaks that we have managed, we have learned a lot in partnership with Alberta Health Services and Alberta Health as to how we can better mitigate the spread of COVID-19 once it has entered our care home. While many of you are likely wondering how it entered the care home, that is a question we may never be able to answer. We know that this virus is a tricky one and that people can have it while displaying no symptoms. What our focus has to be and will continue to be is on keeping our residents as healthy as possible and protecting both them and our staff.

Our Emergency Operations Team meets daily, and sometimes more often, to ensure that we are managing this outbreak effectively. Around these meetings, there is continuous work to stay on top of the latest information related to COVID. Their role is to assist the care home with staffing needs, supplies like personal protective equipment, education for employees, and communications.



Site leadership and our emergency operations team meet regularly with Alberta Health Services and Alberta Health to ensure that we are working together to respond to this outbreak. In fact, in the past couple of weeks, we've had several audits conducted, and I can report that we have been told that we are meeting all of the Chief Medical Officer of Health guidelines related to the pandemic.

I know how stressful this time must be for you. Honestly, I can't fully imagine how you must feel. But I want you to know that you should have the highest confidence in the care home leadership and employees and trust that they are working tirelessly to see us through this. We are in this together, and I am here to support our team on the frontlines anyway that I can.

Message from Scott Fielding, Good Samaritan Vice President of Operations, Quality and Clinical Supports:

I know that the last couple of weeks at the care home have been stressful for all of you, and I would like to thank the residents and their family members for their ongoing support to the staff and physicians at the care home.

We would also like to acknowledge the efforts of people such as Laurie, the site manager, and Dr. Murphy, the medical lead for the care home for their efforts to ensure that the residents are well looked after and the staff are supported.

To give a bit of background, we had our first positive test on October 18, 2020, and this is when we were declared on outbreak. At this time (November 23, 2020 at 7 p.m.) the current status is as follows:

- *Twenty-three residents have been impacted by COVID. Dr Murphy has been reviewing each of the residents on a daily basis to ensure they are getting the care they need. We are also working closely with AHS and Public Health to ensure we are doing everything we can to keep the residents as safe as possible.*
- *Twelve employees have been impacted. Three employees have recovered and have returned to work.*
- *Sadly, we have had one resident pass away.*

Dr. Murphy has been working hard the last couple of days to assess the residents who have tested positive and working with Alberta Health to see how many of those residents can be put in the recovered category. The criteria that we need to use with regards to putting our residents and staff in the recovered category is dependent on the symptoms that they are showing or not showing at the time, the time period since they tested positive, and then confirming all of that with Public Health. Dr. Murphy worked hard over the weekend and identified a number of residents that we have now put forward to public health to see about putting them into the recovered category. We haven't heard back from Public Health yet as to whether we can put them into that category.

We continue to learn about this disease every day, including at our other care homes, and about how we should be responding to it. We are working closely with our partners in Alberta Health Services and Alberta Health and have been receiving great support from them. We will continue to communicate with all of you on a weekly basis unless there is a significant change to the care home, and Laurie and her team will be in contact with you directly if there is a change in status for individual residents. We will continue to communicate with you, and if you have any questions please reach out to the care home or email goodsaminfo@gss.org.

Questions and Answers:

1. **How is someone determined to be recovered, and why haven't we seen more recovered cases at the care home?**

Determining if someone is recovered from COVID-19 is a joint decision made by the on-site physician as well as Alberta Health Services based on specific criteria. It depends on how long they were considered positive, as well as their current condition and if they have any lingering symptoms. This can sometimes take a bit of time because of the various steps in the process, and we are very grateful for your patience. We hope to have recovered numbers reported very soon and we look forward to sharing that with you.

2. **With so many staff having caught the virus, and this being a small community, what are you doing to ensure staffing levels are maintained?**

We are very proud of the work our employees at the care home are doing on a daily basis. Working throughout this outbreak is no easy task, and our employees have demonstrated commitment and courage while working hard to keep our residents safe. Our number one priority continues to be the health and wellbeing of the residents at the care home and our employees. We have taken several steps to ensure that we have adequate, and often increased, staffing levels to ensure residents are receiving proper care. This has included bringing in agency staffing and allocating staff from some of our other locations, to assist. Whenever we are able to bring in extra staffing, we are doing so.

3. **What areas are currently affected by the COVID-19 virus?**

Our long term care area is the only area affected at this time. It is not on the Evergreen Supportive Housing side, and it is not currently in the dementia cottage.

What precautions are in place to limit the spread?

We have implemented all public health recommendations and infection, prevention and control protocols. Employees are working hard to mitigate the risk of transmission, and we are following all public health orders, including:

- Residents and employees are being cohorted as much as possible.
- Enhanced cleaning is taking place (high touch surfaces twice a day and low touch once daily).
- Employees continue to wear appropriate personal protective equipment (gloves, gowns, face shields and masks) when entering resident areas and providing care.
- Increased screening for residents and employees.
- Regular employee education and reminders on the use of personal protective equipment, physical distancing and hand hygiene. We are performing personal protective equipment and hand hygiene audits.
- As part of our ongoing risk assessment, continually reviewing our practices in partnership with public health and implementing new measures as required.
- Limiting visitation to compassionate care reasons only.
- Following all public health orders.

4. Are residents and employees tested daily?

Right now, we are conducting weekly asymptomatic testing for any residents and employees who have not tested positive. It was determined in partnership with Alberta Health Services and Alberta Health that weekly testing is appropriate at this time. However, if a resident or employee begins to show symptoms, they will be tested right away. This is the current standard that is the practice across all long term care sites in Alberta, not just for our care homes or Good Samaritan Pembina Village.

5. Are residents who have recovered considered immune and able to move around the care home?

Right now we don't have solid evidence of immunity, so we would treat everyone as if they are a new case if they start to show symptoms again until we understand the disease more.

6. I am concerned with the resident's wellbeing as they are kept in their rooms for so long. Is recreation continuing?

We know how important it is for residents to continue to enjoy recreation activities. For any resident that feels up to an activity, they are offered recreation one-to-one in their rooms.

7. How long does a resident need to remain isolated?

Currently all residents in the long term care area are on contact droplet precautions, which means employees wear full personal protective equipment when entering a resident care space and all residents are restricted to their rooms to try to limit any potential exposure. This is something that needs to continue until we are able to remove the additional precautions at the care home.

Usually how long a resident is on isolation is determined in consultation with Public Health. At a minimum, a resident is usually on isolation for 14 days unless they continue to have symptoms after that.

8. When will visitation open back up at the care home?

Visitation will open up once we are no longer on outbreak. We know that visitation is a challenge and that having visitation from families is important. Right now, while on outbreak we can only allow compassionate care visits. However, we encourage you to contact the site to arrange virtual visits with your loved one. You can also visit our website (www.gss.org/well-wishes) to send messages and photos to your loved ones. You can even use the well wishes tool to send messages to our employees if you would like to as well.

9. Once the care home is no longer on outbreak, would The Good Samaritan Society consider having a designated visitation meeting room for residents in the dementia cottage so their risk of exposure would be lower?

That's something we can look into once we're not in outbreak. We're always open to new ideas moving forward.

10. When will the Wi-Fi be updated at the care home to facilitate communication with loved ones?

We know that this is an ongoing issue. We've purchased iPads with an LTE signal so they can utilize a cellular signal. We have also placed boosters and a Wi-Fi extender at the care home, but we've run into a few compatibility issues. We are actively working to correct that, and hope to have it rectified soon.

11. How many residents currently live at the care home?

- There are 28 residents in the long term care main area out of 30 beds.
- Five residents in the dementia cottage out of ten beds
- The supportive living side is currently full with 30 residents.

12. When and how will the outbreak be declared over?

Public health will be responsible for declaring the outbreak over. It can be declared over 28 days after our last positive case. However, there are some exceptions to that, including if residents are having lingering symptoms. At this time, we can't, unfortunately, say when the outbreak will be declared over.

13. Is a negative test required for a resident to be considered recovered? When is a resident deemed recovered?

When someone does test positive we do not test them again because their blood can sometimes show that positive for a long time, but it doesn't mean that they still have the infection or are spreading it.

To date, Dr. Murphy has seen about 11 residents that he would deem recovered, meaning their symptoms were mild or short lived, they showed themselves returning to their baseline normal self, and they have gone the 14 days since their symptoms began.

Closing Remarks from Dr. Katherine Chubbs, Good Samaritan President and Chief Executive Officer:

Thank you again for taking the time to join us this evening. I hope that we were able to provide some valuable information, and if we didn't get to your question, but you've submitted one in the chat box, we will respond in writing. If you didn't feel comfortable or get a chance to ask your question, please email goodsaminfo@gss.org. You can also call Laurie so we can ensure it's addressed.

Finally, I wanted to reiterate our commitment to keeping your loved ones safe and healthy, as well as our employees. I know that what you're experiencing is not easy, and being apart from your loved ones is extremely challenging, so please continue to reach out to the care home to arrange virtual visits and to send well wishes through our website. Again, thank you for taking the time to join us this evening, and I hope you all stay safe and well. God bless.