



March 30, 2021

Dear Good Samaritan individuals and families,

This month marked a milestone for all of us in terms of the COVID-19 pandemic as we reached one year since this all began. A time to reflect on those who are no longer with us and the challenges that we have faced together. There is hope for the future however as we see the continued COVID-19 vaccine rollout and the positive impact it is having on those we care for.

COVID-19 Vaccination

I am please that some of our group home individuals and employees have begun to receive the vaccination, and I expect that more will have the opportunity as we move into April based on the government's rollout plan. If you would like to learn more about the different phases, please visit the Government of Alberta [website](#).

I am happy to report that of our eligible residents, individuals, and employees who have been vaccinated, we have had not had any significant side effects experienced at this time. We've also posted some videos on our social media (@goodsamaritanCA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#)) of some of our continuing care residents explaining why it was important for them to be vaccinated. I encourage you to check them out.

Visitation

As we see variant COVID-19 cases rising in the communities around us, our Emergency Operations Center has made the decision that at this time we will not be having indoor social visits at our homes. Designated family and support visits can still be arranged at the homes with the program manager. We have attached brochures to this letter that explain who designated visitors are and the risk of visitation that everyone needs to be aware of. Compassionate care visits will continue as normal.

We know that this can be frustrating, but I assure you we are following the public health orders and processes to keep those we care for, our employees and our communities' safe. As we continue to asses our risk tolerance, visitation restrictions will continue to be a standing topic of our resident and family council meetings where applicable moving forward. If your home has these council meetings, I strongly encourage you to attend them if you are able. If you would like to learn more, please speak to your program manager.

As the weather warms up, more of our homes will be able to start up outdoor social visits again, and I know that many people are looking forward to that. As a friendly reminder, once outdoor social visits begin again at your location, there are still public health protocols in place that need to be followed. They are as follows:

- People will need to be masked for outdoor social visits if physical distance is not able to be maintained. We will provide you with a procedure mask as cloth masks are not preferred.
- Outdoor visits can have up to five people (including the individual), if the visiting space can safely accommodate that many people. This will be dependent on the space available at each home.

Once the weather permits, outdoor visits will need to be scheduled in advance with the home so that we can ensure the various requests are coordinated as these are shared visiting spaces.

I also want to remind you that there is the ability to schedule virtual visits with the home, and you can also send messages and photos through our website by visiting www.gss.org/well-wishes.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

As a friendly reminder, we will provide visitors with the appropriate PPE necessary depending on the situation. At all times, this will include a procedure mask, but there may be instances where additional PPE (e.g. gowns, gloves, eye protection) is required. For example, if you are a designated family/support visitor or compassionate care visitor and the home is on a COVID-19 outbreak, our employees will advise you how to put the PPE on properly and to take it off safely. If you're ever not sure about how to put on the required PPE, please do not hesitate to ask an employee. We are happy to help.

Communication

In order to ensure that everyone is kept up to date, letters such as this one are posted on our website (<https://gss.org/preparations-for-covid-19/>), and we strongly encourage individuals and their primary contacts/legal health representatives to share them with other loved ones who may not receive them directly. If a home goes on a COVID-19 outbreak, individuals and families will be contacted directly, and our team will keep them updated on the situation regularly. All active outbreaks and case numbers are available to view on our [website](#).

If you have any questions or concerns, please continue to reach out to your program manager or email goodsaminfo@gss.org. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we continue to manage the COVID-19 pandemic. Your support has meant a lot to our employees.

Sincerely,



Edythe Anderson
Director of Quality and Clinical Supports
Interim EOC Incident Commander