



April 30, 2021

Dear Good Samaritan individuals and families,

COVID-19 Vaccination

Since our update to you last month, there has been a continual rise of COVID-19 cases across the province and in the communities we serve. While that is concerning, it is positive news that so many of our individuals have or are choosing to be vaccinated. Since the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine to those in our care, we've seen a significant drop in the number of outbreaks and their severity, which tells us the vaccine is making a huge difference.

For this reason, I want to strongly encourage anyone who has not already been vaccinated, but who is eligible, to please do so as soon as possible. If not to protect yourselves, then to protect your loved ones and your communities. If you need more information on the current vaccine rollout, please visit the [Alberta Health Services website](#).

For the individuals in our care who would like to be vaccinated, they can reach out to their team coordinator/client services facilitator to assist them with next steps. For everyone else, vaccination appointments can be booked one of three ways, once you are eligible:

- [Participating pharmacies](#);
- [AHS online](#); or
- Call 811.

As of today, Designated Family and Support Persons (DFSP) are now eligible to be vaccinated as part of Phase 2C of the provincial vaccine rollout. If you are a designated family/support person and you would like to be vaccinated, you will be required to confirm your eligibility at your appointment. You will need to bring personal ID that shows your birthdate (e.g. Driver's License or Alberta Health Care Card), and a letter from the program manager for the home that confirms you are a DFSP. Please request this letter from the homes program manager or team coordinator.

Visitation

This week, the Alberta government announced that visitation restrictions for congregate settings such as our shared living homes will be changing, and as an organization, we have until **May 10**, to implement. In order to do so, we will require input from our individuals/legal guardians. In the coming days, program managers/team coordinators will be reaching out to individuals or their legal guardians to help us develop a visiting approach for our homes, including decisions regarding indoor social visits and the size of outdoor visits.

The government also announced that as of May 10, individuals will be able to name up to four designated family/support persons (DFSP) – which is an increase from the current two. Our program managers/team coordinators will also be reaching out to individuals/legal health representatives to determine who the two additional DFSP should be and to develop visiting schedules as required.

Please find attached a copy of the Chief Medical Officer of Health's Order 16-2021, which outlines the new visitation guidelines fully. I would encourage you to please review page seven of the Order which covers designated family/support persons and visitor responsibilities. As we work to implement these changes, I would kindly ask for your patience and understanding. With rising COVID-19 cases in our communities, we need to ensure that we're doing this as safely as possible.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

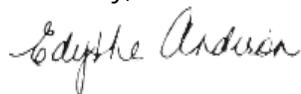
As a friendly reminder, we will provide visitors with the appropriate PPE necessary depending on the situation. At all times, this will include a procedure mask, but there may be instances where additional PPE (e.g. gowns, gloves, eye protection) is required. For example, if you are a designated family/support 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.

Sincerely,



Edythe Andison
Director of Quality and Clinical Supports
Good Samaritan Emergency Operations Centre Incident Commander