

April 27, 2020

COVID19: Long-Term Care Homes Outbreak List, Patient Ombudsman & More

Dear residents and long-term care team members,

The attention given to our LTC sector regarding the prevention and containment of COVID-19 continues. The government has increased testing, including COVID-19 testing of residents and team members in homes not yet showing signs or symptoms of the virus. Medical expertise and human resourcing from outside of the LTC sector is heightened (provincial and federal interventions) and organizations continue to do their utmost to create and spread tools, resources, aid and stories of encouragement in this difficult time.

As per the testing directive dated April 21; efforts are moving forward to ensure that all residents, essential visitors and team members (staff) in ALL LTC homes are tested for COVID-19.

[NEW! Homes in Outbreak Listed on Government Website:](#)

Now, available to the public, is the list of homes with active outbreaks and resolved outbreaks. This new resource is found on the Ontario Government website and contains LTC specific information on the number of homes with outbreaks, number of residents, staff members, deaths and an alphabetical list of all LTC homes experiencing outbreaks: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus#section-0>

As of April 26th, the Ministry of Health reports that 150 LTC homes are experiencing outbreaks, 2523 confirmed cases for residents, 1187 confirmed cases for staff, < 5 confirmed staff deaths, and 671 confirmed resident deaths. This list is updated daily.

[Best Buy and Google Social Connection Initiative:](#)

We are disseminating this information from Best Buy for your information. Sending this information doesn't indicate partnership or endorsement.

Finding alternative ways to help residents stay connected to their families and loved ones is more critical now than ever. The stress and worry about loved ones and family members is at an all-time high due to the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic.

Best Buy and Google are partnering to help residents stay connected with their loved ones using video calls. Google is providing a limited number of Google Nest Hub Max smart displays at no cost to applicable LTC homes.

Best Buy is providing account creation and virtual setup support so that your staff can stay focused on taking care of residents. Only a minimal amount of time will be needed by your support staff to implement this valuable service. In addition, Best Buy will provide instructions to your staff on how to share all the details on installing and setting up the free Google Duo video chat app with residents' families so that they can participate.

Submit your application ASAP as the available products are limited:

<http://bit.ly/BBYGOSOCIAL>

Applications will open at 9am PST on Monday April 27, 2020 and will be accepted until 11:59 pm PST, Saturday May 2, 2020. Please note that only buildings that meet the eligibility requirements, as determined by Best Buy, will be contacted. Eligible organizations or buildings will be contacted on a first-come, first-serve basis while supplies last.

Eligibility requirements:

- Buildings must be able to support a shared use model with access available to multiple residents
- Wi-Fi and Network security requirements will be supported to ensure the products can be used
- 2.4GHz or 5GHz wi-fi network
- WPA2 authentication using SSID and Passphrase, note RADIUS or similar is not compatible
- No captive portals on this network (Example: Hotel Wi-Fi with a login screen)
- Recommended Wi-fi speeds of at least 20mbps download and 10mpbs
- Minimal firewall port blocking to ensure Google products and services can access the network
- A staff member at the building will be assigned to setup the product and champion the program
- Agree that Best Buy Canada Ltd. can email me details about this opportunity, as well as future opportunities and programs that Best Buy Canada Ltd. has available that may benefit my organization

For any questions, contact Best Buy at seniorliving@bestbuy.ca

Monday April 27th, 2020 - PUBLIC
APPEAL: Shining a light on concerns in
LTC homes during the COVID-19 Crisis -
Patient Ombudsman is making a public
appeal for stories and concerns



In response to receiving a dramatic increase in calls during the COVID-19 crisis, Ontario's Patient Ombudsman (OPO) is asking residents, families and staff to share their stories and situations where they feel the safety of long-term care home residents may be in jeopardy because of COVID-19. This information will help to inform the OPO about systemic issues that long-term care homes are facing and help them advise and respond appropriately.

Due to COVID-19 the Patient Ombudsman is learning of significant safety concerns in long-term care homes including:

- Severe staffing shortages;
- Inadequate infection control and prevention measures;
- An inability to meet the basic care needs for some residents; and
- Poor or no communication to residents and families.

What will the Patient Ombudsman do with the information/complaints?

Like all complaints that come to their office, they will try to resolve the individual concerns you might have directly with the long-term care home. The OPO will escalate any urgent complaints that require action with the appropriate organizations (Ministry of Long-term Care, LHIN regional leads, etc.)

OPO's main goal with this call for complaints is to gather more information to help the long-term care home sector with pandemic planning. OPO wants to know what is working and what isn't.

OPO understands that that two thirds of long-term care homes do not yet have a COVID-19 outbreak and they are aware that there may be a second wave of COVID-19 during cold and flu season later this year. Their hope is to learn from the experiences of residents, families and caregivers, to protect everyone in long-term care from a possible second wave of COVID-19 and for future pandemic outbreaks.

OPO knows that this is a frightening time for so many and want to thank you for helping them shine a light on what is happening in long-term care homes.

Anyone with relevant information about COVID-19 issues in Ontario's long-term care homes is encouraged to file a complaint online at www.patientombudsman.ca, or call the Patient Ombudsman at [1-888-321-0339](tel:1-888-321-0339)

[NEW: Pandemic Pay for Team Members:](#)

To provide additional support for frontline workers fighting COVID-19, the government is providing temporary additional hourly ‘top up’ wages. These workers are working long hours and incur increased risk. The funds are called “Pandemic Pay” and are available from April 24 to August 13 (16 weeks). The pandemic pay is expected to support over 350,000 workers.

To read the news releases, click on titles below:

- [Ontario Supporting Frontline Heroes of COVID-19 with Pandemic Pay \(April 25, 2020\)](#)
- [Pandemic Pay Provides Support for Frontline Workers Fighting COVID-19 \(April 25, 2020\)](#)

Highlights include:

- \$4.00/hour worked on top of regular wages
- In addition, a monthly lump sum of \$250.00 for 4 months will be awarded to frontline workers who have worked over 100 hours per month.
- Funding is available in all LTC homes, even those who do not have an outbreak of COVID-19
- Eligible staff are limited to front line non managerial staff including: PSWs, RNs, RPNs, NPs and auxiliary staff including cooks, housekeeping and other key workers
- Management positions are not eligible

[Minister’s Directive: COVID-19: Supporting LTC Homes:](#)

The Minister of LTC issued a directive effective April 24, 2020 with respect to every LTC home experiencing an outbreak. In essence, the directive states that LTC homes must cooperate with Ontario Health and provide entry to staff and resources made available from the federal government (including Health Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada and the Canadian Armed Forces) or public hospitals, i.e. follow advice and allow them to provide services in relation to infection control or resident care as required.

To view the complete documents, click on titles below:

- [MEMO: Minister’s Directive: Supporting Long-Term Care Homes \(April 25, 2020\)](#)
- [MINISTER’S DIRECTIVE: COVID-19: Supporting Long-Term Care Homes \(April 24, 2020\)](#)
- [FAQ’s: Ministry of Long-Term Care - Minister’s Directive \(April 24, 2020\)](#)

[Newly Updated Screening Document:](#)

The Ministry of Health released an updated screening tool (version 2) to be used in LTC and retirement homes. The tool provides basic information and questions and is not intended to take the place of medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. This document, **“COVID-19 Screening Tool for Long-Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes” (MOH April 24, 2020)**, is to be used as part of active screening of all staff, essential visitors and anyone else entering the home for COVID-19. Screening must occur twice daily and include symptom screening and temperature checks.

[New Tool/Template for Communicating with Resident in LTC during COVID-19:](#)

With the amount of work and information flowing through long-term care (LTC) homes during COVID-19, it is difficult to cover all areas of communication. It has become apparent that residents, who are at the heart of what we do, are often left out of the communication loop. **Residents want and need to be informed about what is happening in their homes.**

The Ontario government has given a clear directive to home operators about their responsibility to keep residents (as well as staff and family members) informed about COVID-19 in Directive #3 for LTC Homes under the LTC Homes Act:

<http://www.ontarc.com/documents/MOHLTC/20200331UpdatedCMOHDirective3LTCH.pdf>

To assist with this communication, OARC has created a template that can be updated on an ongoing basis to reflect changes in your home’s situation.

Click here to access the template:

<http://www.ontarc.com/documents/comtemp/20200417ComTipsTemplate.docx>

We hope that this will assist you in your continued efforts to communicate with residents living in the home you operate.

Be well and keep in touch. Let us know how you are doing!

Sincerely,

Dee Lender

Executive Director