**POLICY**

To help maintain the emotional and physical well-being of Ivan Franko Home residents, and lessen the impact of social isolation from their loved ones during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Home will support residents in receiving visitors, while at the same time mitigating the risk of exposure to COVID-19 by ensuring that necessary infection control measures are in place to protect the health and safety of residents, staff and visitors, and to help maintain the Home free of an outbreak.

The Home will follow the Directives, Guidance and recommendations issued by the Government of Ontario and Public Health authorities in implementing required visiting procedures and appropriate infection control measures.

The latest update to the Home’s policy, in accordance with the most recent Ministry of Long-Term Care “COVID-19 Visiting Policy” and Minister’s Directive: “COVID-19: Long-Term Care Home Surveillance Testing and Access to Homes”, pertains to changes in requirements for staff and visitor testing for COVID-19, which are related to the classification of the Toronto Public Health region, where the Home is located, as being in the “Grey-Lockdown” level. The Home will not be able to allow anyone to enter who has not met these requirements as of November 30, 2020.

Essential visitors, including caregivers, continue to be the only type of visitors permitted to visit the Home, subject to various requirements as outlined in the procedure. General visitors continue to be excluded from visiting.

This policy and the procedures will be revised as necessary, as the pandemic situation evolves and government guidance is amended. The local Public Health Unit (PHU) may also provide direction and/or restrictions on visitors to the Home, depending on the specific situation.

Non-compliance with this policy and infection control measures may result in the discontinuation of visits for the non-compliant visitor.

**DEFINITION—Types of Visitors:**

1. **Essential Visitor**

* A person visiting a very ill or palliative resident, or
* A person performing essential support services (e.g. food delivery, inspector, plumber, or other health care services (e.g. phlebotomy)),

and includes:

* A support worker who is visiting to perform essential support services for the Home or for a resident at the Home (e.g. physician, nurse practitioner, maintenance worker, food deliverer, provided they are not staff of the Home)
* A caregiver (at least 18 years of age) who is designated by the resident/Power of Attorney (POA)/Substitute Decision-Maker (SDM), and is visiting to provide direct care to the resident (e.g. supporting feeding, mobility, personal hygiene, cognitive stimulation, communication, meaningful connection, relational continuity and assistance in decision-making).

Caregivers can include: family members who provide meaningful connection, a privately hired caregiver, paid companions and translators.

An “essential visitor” is the only type of visitor allowed when a resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, or the Home is in a declared outbreak.

1. **General Visitor**

* A person who is not an “essential visitor” and is visiting:
* to provide non-essential services, who may or may not be hired by the Home or the resident/POA/SDM, and/or
* for social reasons (e.g. family members, friends) that the resident/POA/SDM assess as different from direct care.

Please note: the Home’s staff, volunteers and placement students are not considered visitors.

**PROCEDURE**

The Home will ensure that:

* Residents, families and staff receive information about:
  + visiting and associated procedures (including scheduling, screening, and infection prevention and control (IPAC) practices), and
  + the need to comply with these procedures and IPAC protocols, and how non-adherence will be dealt with (including that it may result in the discontinuation of visits for the non-compliant visitor),

as well as any updates, as necessary

* Every visitor is provided with clear directions on safety precautions, including: physical distancing, respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, IPAC practices, proper use of masks or face coverings and other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and limiting movement around the Home
* Essential caregivers are provided with a copy of this policy prior to their first visit after the policy is released, and attest to reading/re-reading the policy at least once a month thereafter
* Essential caregivers receive the required education and training before their first visit after this policy is released, and monthly re-training thereafter
* A schedule of booked visits and list of visitors is maintained, and kept available and accessible for the appropriate staff members.

**DESIGNATION OF A CAREGIVER**

* The decision to designate an individual as a caregiver is entirely the resident/POA/SDM’s concern
* A maximum of 2 caregivers may be designated per resident at a time
* The designation should be made in writing to the Home on the “Designation of an Essential Caregiver” form (IC-A-048(c))
* Caregiver designations will also be documented in the progress notes by registered staff
* The resident/POA/SDM may change a designation in response to a change in the:
* resident’s care needs that are reflected in the plan of care
* availability of a designated caregiver, either temporary (e.g. illness) or permanent.

**VISITOR ACCESS TO THE HOME**

**Essential Visitors**

* Visits for essential visitors are permitted, subject to direction from the local PHU
* Any number of support workers may visit the Home
* A maximum of 1 caregiver per resident may visit at a time, including when the Home is in an outbreak, or if a resident is self-isolating or symptomatic
* A caregiver may not visit any other resident or Home for 14 days after visiting another:
* resident who is self-isolating or symptomatic, and/or
* Home in an outbreak
* Caregiver visits do not require scheduling, and are not restricted as to length or frequency
* The Home may, at its discretion, schedule and manage visits by essential visitors who are not caregivers, to balance the safety of residents, staff and visitors with the needs of the Home and its residents, taking into account physical/infrastructure characteristics of the Home, staffing availability and the Home’s status with respect to PPE.

**VISITOR SCREENING PROTOCOLS**

All visitors should consider their personal health and susceptibility to the virus in determining whether visiting the Home is appropriate.

**All visitors:**

* Should self-screen for COVID-19 signs and symptoms at home and not visit if they have any symptoms
* Will be actively screened by staff for symptoms and exposures for COVID-19, using the “Active Screening Questionnaire (Visits during the COVID-19 Pandemic)” (IC-A-048(a)). The Questionnaire may be administered on the phone.
* Will have temperatures checked prior to each visit
* Must attest to not be experiencing any of the typical and atypical symptoms of COVID-19
* Will not be admitted if they do not pass the screening.

Any visitor exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 will be advised to go home immediately, to self-isolate and contact their primary health care provider or Telehealth regarding testing.

**In addition to the above screening procedures for all visitors:**

**Caregivers and Support Workers:**

* Must provide proof (e.g. a printout or on a mobile device showing the individual’s name, test date and result) of a negative COVID-19 test result in the past week \*\*
* Must verbally attest to not subsequently testing positive

before they are granted entry.

If a caregiver or support worker refuses to provide proof and attestation, they will not be allowed to enter the Home.

Exceptions:

* The Home does not need to ask for proof or attestation from:
* a support worker when he/she requires immediate access to the Home in an emergency situation
* a person visiting a very ill or palliative resident
* a person who has previously had laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 and was cleared by the local PHU.

\*\* The collection of, and any subsequent use or disclosure of, this personal health information will be in accordance with the Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004 (PHIPA).

**Caregivers:**

* Must attest that in the last 14 days, they have not visited another resident who is self-isolating or symptomatic, and/or another Home in an outbreak.

**Visitors who pass screening will be given:**

* instructions on Hand Hygiene to be done before and after the visit
* instructions on maintaining a physical distance of over 2 metres from others, including the resident, at all times
* a surgical/procedure mask and any other PPE required, and shown how to properly put it on/take it off, if needed
* instructions about any other applicable IPAC procedures and visitor guidelines in place in the Home at the time of the visit.

**IPAC EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR CAREGIVERS**

The Home will:

* Provide training that addresses:
  + how to safely provide direct care, including putting on and taking off required PPE, and
  + Hand Hygiene

before a caregiver’s first visit to any resident, after this policy is released, and monthly retraining, or more frequently if required

* Ask caregivers to attest that they have read this policy, before their first visit to any resident after this policy is released, and attest that they have read/re-read the visitor policy at least once every month thereafter, and record this on the “Visitor Declaration re: Visiting during the COVID-19 Pandemic Policy” form (IC-A-048(b))
* Use Public Health Ontario resources and guidance documents to support this education and training, including:
* a Guidance document entitled “Recommended Steps: Putting on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)” (attached)
* videos entitled: “Putting on Full Personal Protective Equipment”, “Taking off Full Personal Protective Equipment” and “How to Hand Wash”.

**PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)**

All indoor visitors are required to wear surgical/procedure masks at all times for the duration of their visit in the Home.

**Essential Visitors:**

* Essential visitors who are in contact with a resident who is suspect or confirmed with COVID-19 must wear appropriate PPE.
* The Home will provide surgical/procedure masks, gloves, gowns and eye protection (i.e. face shield or goggles), as required.

If, due to supply shortages, the Home is not able to provide surgical/procedure masks, no visitors will be permitted inside the Home. Essential visitors who have appropriate PPE provided by their employer, may enter the Home.

**OTHER INFORMATION**

* Caregivers may only visit and provide care for the resident who has designated them as a caregiver
* If the resident has a private room, the caregiver and resident should remain in the room
* If the resident has a shared room, the caregiver should always be mindful of the other resident in the room and ensure he/she is not disturbed
* Caregivers are encouraged to spend time outside with the resident, if possible
* The caregiver and resident must not participate in any resident group activities
* Caregivers may bring gifts or other items for the resident (e.g. flowers, chocolate, cards, clothing, newspapers, etc.) but these items should be sealed/packaged and must be given to staff to be properly disinfected before they are given to the resident
* Bringing in any outside food for the resident is not allowed
* Caregivers should eat and use washroom facilities before their visit, however:
* if needed, a designated washroom will be available for caregivers
* if the caregiver must eat for medical reasons, he/she must do so in the designated area and not near residents
* Visitors must maintain physical distancing of over 2 metres from the resident at all times, except when providing direct care.

**NON-ADHERENCE BY VISITORS**

* Recognizing the importance of visits on the resident’s physical and emotional well-being, together with the need to protect the Home’s residents, staff and visitors from the risk of COVID-19, the Home will make every reasonable effort to support visitors in understanding and adhering to visiting requirements and IPAC protocols by providing:
* Clear information about procedures and necessary IPAC practices
  + Information about other applicable requirements, as needed
* Appropriate PPE and training on its proper use
* Any additional education and training that may be required
* Easy access to hand sanitizer
* Visiting spaces that allow sufficient room for physical distancing
* The opportunity for visitors to clarify any questions they may have.
* If staff observes a visitor not adhering to visiting requirements and IPAC protocols (e.g. not wearing a mask, not properly distancing, etc.), they should report this to the nurse-in-charge/designate, who will:
* Meet with the visitor to discuss and provide any needed additional information, clarification or training
* Ensure that any required resources are available to the visitor and allow him/her sufficient time to adhere to the requirements.

**Ending a visit:**

* If, after explaining the applicable requirement(s) to the visitor and providing sufficient time to adhere to the requirement(s), there is concern due to the visitor’s repeated non-adherence, the Home’s Administration may decide to end a visit
* This decision will be documented in the progress notes.

**Temporarily Prohibiting a Visitor:**

* If there is repeated and flagrant non-adherence (i.e. demonstrated continuously by the visitor over multiple visits) and all reasonable efforts to maintain resident, staff and visitor safety (including ending a visit) have not been successful, the Home’s Administration may consider and decide to temporarily prohibit a visitor from visiting the resident.
* This decision will:
  + stipulate a reasonable length of the prohibition
  + clearly identify which requirements the visitor should meet before visits may be resumed (e.g. reviewing the Home’s Visiting Policy, reviewing specific Public Health Ontario resources, etc.)
  + be documented by the Home
* If the temporarily prohibited visitor is a caregiver, the resident/POA/SDM may need to designate an alternate individual as caregiver to help meet the resident’s care needs.

**Mandatory Prohibition of Entrance to the Home:**

* Under the Minister’s Directive, effective November 30, 2020, the Home will ensure that no caregivers or support workers enter the Home unless the requirements contained in the Directive have been met.

**VIRTUAL AND WINDOW VISITS**

* Scheduled virtual visits on Facetime/Skype will continue.
* Scheduled window visits will continue.