SUBJECT: COVID-19- Managing Visitors and Visitation	SECTION: Environment-Infection Control-Pandemic
POLICY NO: E-ICP8	RHRA-27
EFFECTIVE DATE: November 2, 2020	LAST REVISED DATE: October 14, 2020

Policy:

Informed by the ongoing Covid-19 situation in the community and the Residence, St. Andrew's Residence is taking a gradual, phased approach to the resumption of resident visits., ensuring residents receive visitors safely to help protect against the risk of COVID-19. As the pandemic situation continues to change, the Residence's visitor policy will be reassessed and revised to allow for increased or decreased restrictions as necessary, as circumstances change in the community, within the Residence and with new directives.

The province has introduced "Alert" and "High Alert" areas for the Retirement Homes sector. If the Residence falls into one of these geographic areas, the Residence will be subject to certain restrictions-**regardless if your home is in outbreak or not.** In addition to the details in the policy, RHRA has developed a chart that shows which rules apply for each of the following scenarios:

- Homes NOT in Outbreak
- Homes IN Outbreak
- Homes in Alert Area
- Homes in High Alert Area

All visitors will be instructed to adhere to the requirements set out in the visitor policies to ensure the safety of all residents, staff and visitors, and allow for the continuity of visits that support the mental, physical and spiritual needs of residents for their quality of life while also supporting residents in receiving the care they need and maintaining their emotional well-being.

This policy is guided by current ministry requirements per Directive #3 and the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility (MSAA) *Retirement Home COVID-19 Visiting Policy.* The rules in this policy are in addition to the requirements established in the Retirement Homes Act, 2010 and its regulation (O. Reg 166/11).Any non-adherence to the rules set out in the visitor policy will be the basis for discontinuation of visits.

Provided the Residence is not in outbreak and all other requirements are met under Directive # 3 and the MSAA Reopening Retirement Homes, the Residence will continue to carry out a staggered approach to the numbers of visits during the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of visitors per resident, per day, will be determined by the Residence in review of the community and Residence circumstances.

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If the resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, non-essential visits are not allowed, and only one essential visitor is allowed. The frequency and duration of visits will be limited for essential visitors while the Residence is in outbreak. During an outbreak, the Public Health Unit may advise further restrictions on visitors.

Guiding Principles

Safety: Any approach to visiting in the Residence must consider balance and meet the health and safety needs of residents, staff, and visitors, and ensure risks are mitigated.

Emotional Well-being: Allowing visitors is intended to support the emotional well-being of residents and their families/friends, through reducing any potential negative impacts related to social isolation.

Equitable Access: All residents must be given equitable access to receive visitors, consistent with their preference and within reasonable restrictions that safeguard residents.

Flexibility: Any approach to visiting in the Residence must consider the physical/infrastructure characteristics of the retirement home, its staffing availability, whether the home is in outbreak or in an area of widespread transmission,and the current status of the home with respect to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) levels for staff and residents.

Autonomy: Residents have the right to choose their visitors. In addition, residents and/or their substitute decision-makers have the right to designate caregivers.

It is with compassion that we recognize the need for residents' connection with loved ones, and it is through in-person visits that this can be best achieved. We will take all reasonable steps to help facilitate visits within the parameters of Ministry directives. Per Ministry guidelines, the Residence will follow the requirements for the minimum visit frequency and seek to accommodate more visits where possible.

Where it is not possible or advisable for visits to occur in person, the Residence will continue to provide virtual visiting options.

St. Andrew's Residence also recognizes the concepts of non-maleficence (i.e. not doing harm), proportionality (i.e., to the level of risk), transparency and reciprocity (i.e., providing resources to those who are disadvantaged by the policy). These concepts will inform the Residence's decision making with regards to the scheduling and/or refusal of visits as appropriate.

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Prior to Accepting Visitors

As per Ministry of Health (MOH) Directive #3 and MSAA guidelines, the following baseline requirements must be met prior to accepting visitors:

1. The Residence must not be in an outbreak. Where a symptomatic staff or resident is awaiting COVID-19 test results, visitation will only continue at the guidance of the Public Health Unit.
   a) In the event the Residence begins accepting visitors and enters into an outbreak, all *non-essential* visitations will end, and the Residence will follow all Chief Medical Office of Health (CMOH) directives for Residences in outbreak and follow directions from the local public health unit (PHU).
2. The Residence has developed procedures for the resumption of visits and associated procedures, and a process for communicating procedures with residents, families and staff, including but not limited to infection prevention and control (IPAC), scheduling and any setting-specific policies.
   a) This process must include sharing an information package with visitors on IPAC, masking and other operational procedures such as limiting movement around the Residence, if applicable, and ensuring visitors' agreement to comply. Residence materials must include an approach to dealing with non-adherence to Residence policies and procedures, including the discontinuation of visits. **(See Visitor Information Package)**
   b) Dedicated areas for visits.
   c) Protocols to maintain the highest of IPAC standards prior to, during and after visits.
   d) A list of visitors will be maintained. The list will be available for relevant staff to have access.
   e) Protocols for record keeping of visitations for contact tracing purposes.

PLEASE NOTE: Residents who are self-isolating for 14 days under Droplet and Contact precautions may not receive non-essential visitors (i.e. general visitors or personal care service providers). The Residence may allow residents who are not self-isolating to receive general visitors and personal care service providers, provided the home is not in an outbreak or located in a community confirmed to be in High Alert status by the RHRA (see additional details in "E-ICP8.2-General Visitors & E-ICP8.3-Caregiver Visitors") Additional factors that will inform decisions about visitations in the Residence include:

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- **Adequate Staffing**: The residence must currently not have staffing shortages that would affect resident or staff safety and not be under a contingency staffing plan. There must be sufficient staff to implement the protocols related to visitors. Additionally, staffing levels must be sufficient to ensure safe visiting as determined by the home's leadership.
- **Access to adequate testing:** The Residence must have a testing plan in place, based on contingencies informed by local and provincial health officials, for testing in the event of a suspected outbreak.
- **Access to adequate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** The Residence must have adequate supplies of relevant PPE.
- **Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) standards**: The Residence must have essential cleaning and disinfection supplies and adhere to IPAC standards, including enhanced cleaning.
- **Physical Distancing:** Where appropriate, the Residence must be able to facilitate visits in a manner aligned with physical distancing protocols

Type of Visitors

All visitors are responsible for adhering to applicable directives including Directive #3, MSSA guidelines and the home's visitor policy. Visitors should consider their personal health and susceptibility to the virus in determining whether visiting the Residence is appropriate. Outlined in E-IP8-A COVID-19-Managing Visitors-Types of Visitors are the three types of visitors.

Note that the Residence staff and volunteers are not considered visitors as their access to the Residence is determined by the licensee.

Discontinuation of Visits

1. Non-compliance with the Residence's policies could result in the discontinuation of visits for the non-compliant visitor.
2. If required, St. Andrew's staff will remind visitors to follow the physical distancing and proper mask use protocols.
3. If the situations continue, management will be notified to enforce the protocols, and the Indoor Visitor may be asked to leave the premises.

References and Related Policy and Procedures:

1. Appendix A – E-ICP8-A-COVID-19-Managing Visitors-Types of Visitors
2. Appendix B- Information Package for Visitors

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3. Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility (MSAA) Reopening Retirement Homes – September 8, 2020
4. Ministry of Health (MOH) Directive #3
5. Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority (RHRA) Visitation Scenarios based on Alert Status

[Ref. Infection Prevention and Control Section]
[Ref. E-IC6-Routine Practices]
[Ref. E-IC7 Additional Precautions]
[Ref. E-ICP3 COVID-19]
[Ref. E-ICP4 Outbreak protocol for COVID-19]
[Ref. E-ICP8.1-Outside Visits]
[Ref. E-ICP8.2-Indoor Visits-General Visitors]
[Ref. E-ICP8.3-Indoor Visits- Caregivers]
Ref. E-ICP8.3a-Caregiver Designation Form]

Date	Revision	Effective
July 29, 2020	New Policy	July 29, 2020
Oct. 14, 2020	E-ICP8 was Outside Visits-Managing Visitors and Visitation Now the overarching policy for Visitation. Added new information from the updated MSAA and the Directive #3 Added reference to Appendix A with Definitions of the types of visitors	Nov. 2, 2020

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