

Enhanced surveillance and precautions for COVID-19 in long-term care

Criteria:

One LTC staffperson diagnosed with COVID-19 has worked in a long-term care (LTC) facility during the infectious period, without high-risk exposure to residents or staff.

An **outbreak** of COVID-19 is **not** declared during enhanced surveillance and precautions. An outbreak will be declared in the following circumstances:

- A high-risk exposure has occurred (e.g. a staff case has had a breach in PPE during contact with residents, or while in close contact with other staff)
- More than one staff case with symptom onset within 14 days
- A resident of the LTC facility has been diagnosed with COVID-19
- Direction of the MHO, based on risk of transmission

Note: When an outbreak is declared, the Medical Health Officer, VCH Infection Prevention and Control and VCH LTC Operations will manage the outbreak following the “Outbreak Protocol for COVID-19” as detailed in the BC [Infection Prevention and Control Requirements for COVID-19 in Long Term Care and Seniors’ Assisted Living](#).

Measures for enhanced surveillance and precautions:

- **Increase symptomatic screening of residents** to twice daily, using the standardized form provided by Vancouver Coastal Health.
 - When symptoms are identified among residents, immediately take a viral specimen (NP swab) for lab testing and isolate the resident(s) under contact and droplet precautions.
- **Continue to screen all staff and visitors for symptoms** on arrival to the LTC site, using the standardized form provided by Vancouver Coastal Health.
- Confirm that no staff are working at multiple LTC facilities.
- Meetings will be scheduled at the direction of the Medical Health Officer, with VCH Infection Prevention and Control, VCH LTC Operations and leadership personnel for the affected LTC facility.
- Continue to follow the directions for routine non-outbreak operation of LTC facilities during the pandemic, as outlined in the [Infection Prevention and Control Requirements for COVID-19 in Long Term Care and Seniors’ Assisted Living](#).
- Physicians should continue to provide care following the *VCH Regional LTC Physician COVID-19 Response Principles and Guidelines*.
- Enhanced surveillance and precautions will be implemented for 14 days after the last date of potential exposure, which may be reduced or extended at the direction of the Medical Health Officer.

Some measures are not required during enhanced surveillance and precautions:

- **Admissions, re-admissions, or transfers** do not need to be restricted.
- **Visits** by family members and companions do not need to be restricted.
- **Non-essential services and group activities** (including meals in common areas) do not need to be suspended
- **Notification** of all residents, families, staff and other service providers is not required (i.e. through letters and signage)
- **Staff cohorting to specific units** is not required.
- **Asymptomatic screening tests** for residents and staff should only be implemented under direction of the MHO.

Note: These and other measures may be required at the direction of the MHO, based on assessment of the specific scenario.