Social visitation guidelines for long-term care and seniors’ assisted living facilities

April 7, 2021

VCH Facility leaders value the need for social connectedness between you and your loved ones. The following guidelines support the updated Ministry of Health guidelines on social visitations to long-term care (LTC) and seniors’ assisted living (SAL) facilities.

*Please note - these guidelines may change with time and will be updated as new Provincial Health Orders are released. At this time, vaccinations are not available for additional social visitors.*

**Number of visitors per resident**
Additional family members and friends can now visit with residents. The number of social visitors a resident can have is a maximum of two adults (plus one child) per visit.

**Duration and location of social visits**
Each resident is entitled to regular and frequent social visits for a minimum of 60-minutes weekly per visitor. Multiple, shorter visits may be arranged based on the residents’ needs. Please speak with the Director of Care for the facility or their designate to confirm how often you may visit with your loved one.

You can visit your loved one in their (single, couple or multi-bed room), or in a designated indoor or outdoor visiting area at the facility, provided all safety measures such as physical distancing from other residents are followed.

**Brief physical contact is permitted**
Physical contact is permitted for short periods of time to support your loved one. You can embrace, kiss (while wearing a medical grade mask) and hold the hand of your loved one. Please follow strict hand hygiene before and after the visit.

**Supervision of visits is unnecessary**
Facility staff do not need to be present during visits. The Facility will continue to screen visitors, ensure hand hygiene and will provide a medical grade mask to all social visitors. Visitors must proceed directly to their loved one’s room or the designated visiting area upon arrival. Visiting with other residents is not permitted.

*(Please turn over)*
Flowers, food and gifts are approved with safety protocols in place
Visitors may bring in home-cooked or packaged food, in a container with a wipeable surface, for consumption during the visit. Please speak to the facility staff if your loved one would like to keep the food for later date. Please see the BCCDC’s food safety webpage for more information related to food safety: [http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/food-safety](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/food-safety).

Flowers remain subject to scent free policies.

Pets may be brought in by the social visitor
Subject to the LTC Home Pet Policies, social visitors can bring pets, provided that the pet visit is restricted to the resident they are visiting only and the pet is not actively ill.

Same Day Social/Leisure Outings are encouraged
If you would like to take your loved one on a leisure outing, please speak with the Director of Care or their facility designate to discuss any issues or guidelines to be followed for the safety of all residents in the facility. Social contact during the outing must follow current BC Public Health Orders related to safe practices for social interactions.

The resident and social visitor must wear a medical grade mask provided by the Facility for the duration of the visits and engage in frequent hand hygiene throughout the outing.

All visitors will be screened for signs and symptoms of illness prior to entry at every visit. Note: If you are taking your loved one on an outing without entering the facility, you will not need to be screened by facility staff. Please follow public health measures, including completing the COVID-19 self-assessment if you develop any symptoms.