



Friday, February 12, 2021

Dear Residents and Families,

We remain committed to providing updates to our residents, families, and staff at AgeCare. As such, we are providing weekly updates to keep you all informed on what is happening at our communities and organization-wide.

1. [Rapid Testing](#) – Update on the rollout of rapid testing at our AgeCare communities.
2. [COVID-19 Variants](#) – Information from Dr. Verna Yiu, President and CEO of Alberta Health Services (AHS)
3. [Indoor Visits](#) – How designated family/support persons can book and visit with their loved one safely.
4. [Virtual Visits](#) – How family and friends can book a virtual visit.
5. [Recreation Calendars](#) - We know the need to stay active, intellectually stimulated, and socially connected never ends.
6. [Weekly Shout-Out](#) – A special thanks to teams helping keep families connected.

We hope these weekly updates helpful. Thank you all for your continued support.

Sincerely,
AgeCare Communications

Rapid Testing of Staff

On Tuesday, the [Alberta government announced](#) it was expanding its rapid testing program to include asymptomatic staff at continuing care facilities. We are currently working with Alberta Health Services (AHS) on the rollout of rapid testing for asymptomatic staff. **More details will be shared next week on this important initiative.**

We expect that for our communities in the Calgary Zone (Calgary and Strathmore), rapid testing of asymptomatic staff will begin next week. This would follow in the South Zone (Brooks, Medicine Hat, and Lethbridge) once the rapid test kits are received.

This is an important step in protecting our residents, who are most vulnerable to COVID-19.

COVID-19 Variants

[Dr. Verna Yiu](#), *President and CEO of Alberta Health Services (AHS)*

What We Know About COVID-19 Variants of Concern

Several new "variant" strains of the SARS-CoV-2 virus have been identified in Alberta and around the world. These variants are similar to, but more infectious than the strain we've experienced so far.

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Evidence is still emerging on the effectiveness of our vaccines on these variants. It's important to remember the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are only a few months old, just like the variants. There is much we do not yet know, though researchers around the world are investigating.

Early investigations so far appear to suggest the current vaccines may be somewhat less effective against some of the new variants, in terms of preventing all symptoms of COVID-19. However, even against the variants, these vaccines still appear to be extremely effective at preventing severe cases, hospitalizations and deaths.

Research is emerging, and there are many vaccines being developed as we speak, so we will continue to watch the emerging literature closely. This is a positive sign. At the same time, it is also a reminder we all cannot simply wait for vaccines to arrive. We need to keep focused on following the measures in place and trying to limit in-person interactions whenever we can.

More on COVID-19 Variants of Concern (Video)

Dr. Verna Yiu Video Message — More on COVID-19 Variants of Concern. [This week's vlog to talk more about the variants of concern](#) are:

- Dr. Laura McDougall, AHS Senior Medical Officer of Health.
- Dr. Lynora Saxinger, Physician and Medical Lead, AHS Antimicrobial Stewardship, North, and co-chair of the Scientific Advisory Group.
- Dr. Graham Tipples, Medical Scientific Director, Public Health, Alberta Precision Laboratories.

Laura, Lynora and Graham explain what the COVID-19 variants of concern are, their potential risk to the health system, and how we monitor and test for them.





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Indoor Visits

Indoor Visit Education Materials
5 Minutes of Education

Take 5 Minutes to Make Your Visit a Safe One
To keep you and your loved one safe, please review these 4 educational videos before your visit. When signing in, visitors are required to acknowledge that they have reviewed education materials before their visit.

If unable to review beforehand, follow these steps when arriving for visit:
1. Open camera on phone and hold device so the code appears in viewfinder.
A poster with the code will also be available at your AgeCare community.
2. Tap notification that appears on screen.
3. Watch all 4 videos then complete form and press 'submit'.

Physical Distancing
1 minute video

Masks: Donning & Doffing
1:33 minute video

Washing Hands with Soap & Water
1:25 minute video

Washing Hands with Sanitizer
1 minute video

Hand Rubbing Steps using the WHO Technique
HAND RUBBING STEPS
Using the World Health Organization (WHO) Technique

As vaccinations across facilities rollout, there may be a temptation to relax your behaviour when visiting a family member. You and your loved ones are still at risk if proper visitation guidelines are not followed. We are on the right path and need to stay committed to following visitation rules for the next several months.

Please read our [Designated Family/Support Persons Indoor Visit Guide \(PDF\)](#) for all the details to ensure a safe visit.

Booking your Indoor Visit

Designated family/support persons must book their visit in advance by calling your AgeCare Community booking phone number.

AgeCare Community	Booking Phone Number	Indoor Visit Hours
Columbia	403-320-9363	Daily, 10 am – 4 pm
Glenmore	403-253-8806	Daily, 10 am – 7 pm
Midnapore	403-519-9397	Daily, 10 am – 7 pm
Orchard Manor	403-362 -6188	Daily, 10 am – 4 pm
Sagewood	403-361-8000	Daily, 10 am – 7 pm
Seton	587-391-4606	Daily, 10 am – 6 pm
SkyPointe	587-619-6363	Daily, 10 am – 7 pm
Sunrise Gardens	403-794-2105	Daily, 10 am – 4 pm
Valleyview	403-526-7000	Daily, 10 am – 4 pm
Walden Heights	403-873-4713	Daily, 10 am – 6 pm



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Virtual Visits

To ensure residents and family can stay connected, we continue to offer scheduled [virtual visits](#). Residents and families can book one virtual technology session per week. All virtual visits will continue as long as the site is staffed appropriately and care needs are met.

☆ Check out this [week's shout-out on our virtual visits](#) below.

To book a virtual visit, contact your AgeCare community:

AgeCare Community	Phone Number	Email
Columbia	403-320-9363 ext. 511	vbohnert@agecare.ca
Glenmore	403-253-8806	BCGConnections@agecare.ca
Midnapore	Long Term Care 403-873-2612	twhite@agecare.ca
	Retirement Living 403-873-2828	ismith@agecare.ca
Orchard Manor	403-362 -6188	omrecreation@agecare.ca
Sagewood	403-361-8003	rhempel@agecare.ca
Seton	-	stroiano@agecare.ca or bburton@agecare.ca
SkyPointe	587-619-6317	mdukart@agecare.ca
Sunrise Gardens	403-794-2105	receptionsrg@agecare.ca
Valleyview	-	diesse@agecare.ca
Walden Heights	587-349-6055	whvirtualcalls@agecare.ca

Recreation Calendars

Our recreation team is working hard to create engaging activities that enrich the mind, body and spirit. We are continuously looking for ways to reduce the risk of transmission while having the least impact on resident well-being.

At this time, recreation activities will be held in individual neighbourhoods where possible and in larger spaces. This is to ensure that all participants can maintain physical distancing.

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View the February Recreation Calendar for your AgeCare Community:

- [AgeCare Columbia – Feb 2021](#)
- [AgeCare Midnapore – Feb 2021](#)
- [AgeCare Orchard Manor – Feb 2021](#)
- [AgeCare Valleyview – Feb 2021](#)
- [AgeCare Sunrise Gardens – Feb 2021](#)

Weekly Shout-Out

We know (and see) how essential virtual visits have been in helping residents, families, and friends connected. This has been an especially important program when a site was in an active outbreak.

"We literally see residents light up when the iPad is brought into the room and they see their loved ones on the other side of the screen."

Since launching this program in March 2020, staff have helped families and friends from all over the world visit with residents. Thank you to our recreation team (and all other team members) who help make these visits happen.

