

MANUAL: NURSING

SUBJECT: VISITOR POLICY

DISTRIBUTION: ALL DEPARTMENTS

NUMBER: 9-P-86

APPROVAL:



DATE: NOVEMBER 2025

SCOPE

This policy applies to all individuals visiting residents living in Radiant Care long-term care homes.

PURPOSE

To ensure a safe environment that adheres to provincially mandated protocols, this policy provides guidance on how visits are to be conducted.

“Every resident has the right to communicate in confidence, receive visitors of their choice and consult in private with any person without interference.”; Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021, s.3(1) ss.3.

POLICY

The following principles guide this visiting policy:

- Safety: Any approach to visiting must balance 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 by reducing any potential negative impacts related to social isolation.
- Equitable Access: All residents must be given equitable access to receive visitors, consistent with their preferences and within reasonable restrictions that safeguard residents.
- Flexibility: The physical/infrastructure characteristics of the home, its staffing availability, whether the home is in an outbreak, and the current status of the home with respect to personal protective equipment (PPE) are all variables to take into account when setting home-specific policies.
- Equality: Residents have the right to choose their visitors. In addition, residents and/or their substitute decision-makers (SDM) have the right to designate caregivers.

Visitors should consider their personal health and susceptibility to the virus in determining whether visiting a long-term care home is appropriate.

DEFINITIONS

Caregiver

- a. Is a family member or friend of a resident or a person of importance to a resident;

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- b. Is able to comply with all applicable laws, including any applicable directives, orders, guidance, advice or recommendations issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health or a medical officer of health appointed under the Health Protection and Promotion Act;
- c. Provides one or more forms of support or assistance to meet the needs of the resident, including providing direct physical support such as activities of daily living or providing social, spiritual or emotional support, wither on a paid or unpaid basis;
- d. Is designated by the resident or the resident's substitute decision maker with authority to give that designation, if any; and.
- e. In the case of an individual under 16 years of age, has approval from a parent or legal guardian to be designated as a caregiver.

Essential Visitors

- a. A caregiver;
- b. A support worker who visits the home to provide support to the critical operations of the home or to provide essential services to residents;
- c. A person visiting a very ill resident for compassionate reasons including, but not limited to, hospice services or end-of-life care; or,
- d. A government inspector with a statutory right to enter a long-term care home to carry out their duties.

General Visitor: A person who is not an essential visitor and is visiting to provide non-essential services related to the home's operations or to a particular resident or group of residents.

General visitors include those persons visiting for social reasons, as well as visitors providing non-essential services such as personal care services, entertainment, or individuals touring the home.

Government Inspectors: Individuals who are inspectors under the Fixing Long -Term Care Act (FLTCA), the Health Protection and Promotion Act, and the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Not Considered Visitors: Long-term care home staff (as defined under the Act), volunteers and student placements are not considered visitors as their access to the home is determined by the licensee.

Support Workers: Individuals who perform essential support services for the care community or for a resident (i.e., physicians, nurse practitioners, maintenance workers, person delivering food, provided they are not staff of the long-term care home/care community as defined in the FLTCA).

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Radiant Care is open to residents, their family members and significant others 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To ensure safety, entrance to the home is restricted between 9pm and 6am; the charge nurse must be contacted if visiting within the restricted hours.

Radiant Care

2. Radiant Care is responsible for supporting residents in receiving visitors during non-outbreak situations, during outbreak situations, and during an outbreak of a communicable disease or an outbreak of a disease of public health significance, an epidemic or a pandemic.
3. Radiant Care is also required to comply with all applicable laws, including any applicable directives, orders, guidance, advice or recommendations issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health, or a medical officer of health appointed under the Health Protection and Promotion Act.
4. Radiant Care must have a process for documenting and keeping a written record of:
 - a. The designation of a caregiver; and,
 - b. The approval from a parent or legal guardian to permit persons under 16 years of age to be designated as a caregiver, if applicable.
5. Radiant Care is to ensure that essential visitors continue to have access to the long-term care home during an outbreak of a communicable disease, an outbreak of a disease of public health significance, an epidemic or a pandemic, subject to any applicable laws.
6. Radiant Care must maintain visitor logs for a minimum of 30 days which include, at a minimum:
 - a. The name and contact information of the visitor;
 - b. The time and date of the visit; and,
 - c. The name of the resident visited.
7. Radiant Care must ensure that the current version of the visitor policy is accessible to all residents, families and all visitors.

PROCEDURE

Access to Radiant Care

1. There are no limits to the number of visitors permitted for indoor or outdoor visits. Capacity is determined by the available space and following applicable guidance and laws.
2. In the case where a local public health unit directs Radiant Care in respect to the number of visitors allowed, Radiant Care must follow the direction of the local public health unit.
3. The following apply to specific visitors:
 - a. Essential Visitors
 - i. There are no limits to the number of essential visitors allowed to come into Radiant Care at any given time.
 - ii. Essential visitors are the only type of visitors allowed when there is an outbreak in Radiant Care or an area of Radiant Care.

- b. General Visitors
 - i. General visitors are not permitted to visit:
 - When Radiant Care or area of Radiant Care is in outbreak; or
 - When the local public health unit so directs.
 - ii. General visitors younger than 14 years of age should be accompanied by an adult. They must follow all applicable public health measures in place at the home (e.g., screening, hand hygiene, source control masking).
- c. Caregiver Designation
 - i. The decision to designate an individual as an essential caregiver is at the discretion and request of the resident and/or SDM. Radiant Care will not participate in or interfere with this decision-making process.
 - ii. Essential caregivers must be at least 16 years of age. In the case of an individual under 16 years of age, they must have written approval from a parent or legal guardian to be designated as a caregiver.

Visitor Logs

1. Radiant Care is to designate one point of entry and maintain one registry of all visitors entering the property to fill out the visitor Sign-In and Out Register.
2. During outbreak situations and during an outbreak of a communicable disease or an outbreak of a disease of public health significance, an epidemic or a pandemic the log may be adjusted to include additional screening, testing and requirements as deemed necessary by the Minister of Health or the local Public Health unit.
3. Radiant Care is to maintain all logs for a minimum of 30 days.

Screening

Passive Screening means that those entering Radiant Care will review screening questions themselves, and there is no verification of screening; for example, signage at entrances as a visual reminder not to enter if symptomatic.

1. Radiant Care has posted information that informs visitors not to visit if they are feeling unwell. All individuals should self-screen before working, attending or visiting a long-term care home.
2. Radiant Care is required to establish and communicate an operational plan including guidance for staff, students, volunteers, support workers, caregivers and general visitors to self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 (passive screening) and other infectious respiratory or gastro-intestinal illnesses. Individuals should be provided with information (for example, screening questions) to monitor their health at home for infectious symptoms, including COVID-19 symptoms and informed that they are not permitted to enter Radiant Care if they are feeling ill or would otherwise fail screening. Signage should be posted at entrances and throughout Radiant Care listing the signs and symptoms of infections, including COVID-19, for self-monitoring, and the steps to take if COVID-19 is suspected or confirmed in any individual.

Responding to Safety Concerns

1. The Chief Executive Officer or designate reserves the right to limit visitation to residents when there are demonstrated safety concerns.
2. All concerns regarding a visitor to the home will be investigated by the Chief Executive Officer or designate. Following investigation of a concern, should the Chief Executive Officer or designate determine that there are safety risks associated with a person visiting Radiant Care, visitation to Radiant Care can be either restricted or terminated.
3. Restrictions that can be imposed include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Visitation during the hours that the Chief Executive Officer or designate is in the Radiant Care site;
 - b. Supervised visitation with another family member being present;
 - c. Set hours for visitation; or,
 - d. Other visitation restrictions as decided in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer or designate.
4. The Chief Executive Officer or designate will meet with people who are having visitation restricted to outline the reason for the restriction and Radiant Care's expectation regarding their visitation.
5. Visitation restrictions imposed by Radiant Care will be reassessed by the Chief Executive Officer or designate on a routine basis.

Responding to Non-Adherence by Visitors During Outbreaks/Pandemics

1. Any non-adherence to this protocol will be the basis for discontinuation of visits or caregiving.
2. Radiant Care recognizes that visits and caregiving are critical in supporting a resident's care needs and emotional well-being. Radiant Care will consider the impact of discontinuing visits on the resident and will make every reasonable effort to ensure that any disruption to visiting/caregiving is proportionate to the severity of the non-adherence.
3. Radiant Care will advise the residents/SDMs/caregivers on procedures for addressing non-adherence by visitors/caregivers.
4. Radiant Care will provide all visitors with education explaining the necessary requirements and will ensure that visitors are provided with sufficient time and resources to adhere to the requirements. If a visitor demonstrates repeated incidents of non-adherence, Radiant Care may end a visit or temporarily prohibit the visitor from coming into Radiant Care.

5. The Chief Executive Officer or delegate will make the final determination to discontinue visiting/caregiving and will advise the resident/SDM/caregiver of this finding in writing. Radiant Care will indicate the timeframe during which the visitor is unable to visit the home. Radiant Care will keep records of all incidents in which visits have been discontinued.
6. If Radiant Care is prohibiting an essential caregiver from coming into the home, the resident and/or SDM may need to designate an alternate individual as caregiver to assist with meeting the needs of the resident.
7. When the home reinvokes a visitor's/caregiver's privileges, Radiant Care will provide additional education to the visitor/caregiver prior to their resumption of visiting in Radiant Care.

REFERENCE

Fixing Long-Term Act, 2021,
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/21f39>

Health Protection and Promotion Act,
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90h07>

Occupational Health and Safety Act,
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o01>

CROSS REFERENCE

8-P-19: Outbreak Management

PT-P-16: Pandemic Plan, located in the Peace Time Disaster and Emergency Safety Plan
Response Manual

REVISIONS

Revision	Date	Changes	Requested By
1.0			

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