

May 4, 2020

Empress Gardens Out of Outbreak

Empress Gardens is no longer in “outbreak”. As reported by Public Health yesterday, the single positive test in a resident was actually a “false-positive”, which means the result was an error. There was not, and is not, an identified case of COVID-19 in the Home. A technical error by a lab in Ottawa resulted in the false-positive test result.

This was a very unfortunate situation which caused unneeded anxiety among our residents, their loved ones, and our staff.

If there is a silver lining, the technical error led to the expedited testing of all residents and staff at Empress Gardens. We would have been scheduled for “surveillance” testing within the next two weeks anyway, as are all local LTC and retirement homes. In addition, the situation served as a dry-run of our COVID outbreak protocols, and I am happy to report that staff continued to come to work and did an excellent job following our procedures.

So far we have received almost all resident results back from the expedited testing that was done at Empress Gardens and all have been negative (clear of COVID-19). The same is true of the many staff results we have received.

Even though COVID-19 was never actually in our Home, staff will receive AON’s “outbreak pay” premium of 15% for the period that Public Health deemed the outbreak to be in place.

We thank you for your patience and understanding during this time. We will continue to be vigilant and make decisions with the health and safety of our residents and staff being the top priority.

Sincerely,

Renée Nixon

Renée Nixon,
Executive Director