



October 22, 2020

To: Residents and Family Members of AON
Long-term Care and Retirement Homes

COVID-19 Wave 2 Update

As a resident or Substitute Decision Maker, you have been hearing regularly in recent months from your Administrator or Executive Director regarding changes to COVID-19 protocols. While we have tried to stay in touch, there hasn't been a need for a more general update on our situation overall. This letter is an effort to do just that.

First, thank you for your patience over the last few months as we implemented the Province's frequently changing visitor and absence guidelines. We have done our best to maximize the opportunities for interactions with families and loved ones, while still adhering to the rules meant to keep everyone safe. As I have said before, our top priority continues to be the health and safety of our residents and staff. Please continue to have patience and follow the guidelines.

During the summer, as we all hoped that COVID-19 might be beaten back, we used the time to refocus and refine our efforts. Now that the province is seeing significantly larger numbers of positive cases, it may be helpful to remind you of what our preventative measures entail:

- Residents are screened for symptoms, including the taking of temperatures, twice each day. Any resident displaying symptoms is self-isolated and tested. Fortunately *we have not had any positive cases in any AON long-term care or retirement home.*
- Staff are screened for symptoms, including the taking of temperatures, twice each day.
- Staff are tested for COVID every two weeks, by our own registered staff. This testing is voluntary, so we continue to encourage compliance by our team members. Note that staff testing in retirement homes is not required, and many operators don't do this, but we think this is an important step in identifying and preventing the spread of COVID.
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfection continues in all AON Homes, with refinements in our process implemented over the summer.
- We continue to have best-in-class infection prevention and control policies and practices that are aligned with the COVID-19 directives from the Chief Medical Officer. Those have also been refined and updated based on new information.
- All staff have been trained, and retrained, on infection control practices.

- We maintain a significant inventory of the personal protective equipment (PPE) needed to protect individuals from COVID. This includes N95 masks. Our supplies of PPE were large in the spring, and we made considerable additional investments over the summer. We were an early adopter of “universal masking” of our staff.
- AON Homes have always had robust influenza vaccination programs, achieving 90%+ amongst residents and staff and significantly outpacing our competitors. The program for the current year is now underway and we encourage everyone to get a flu shot. If you are visiting a resident, we will give you a flu shot to protect you and your loved ones.
- In addition to disinfection, screening/testing, and the use of PPE, we have adopted physical distancing in all our operations. Meetings are now “virtual” meetings, large events remain cancelled, resident activities are now all in small groups with 2 metres between participants, and, as you all know, visits are now subject to safety rules.
- All AON Homes continue to monitor and follow the directives of Ontario’s Chief Medical Officer, the Ministry of Health, and Public Health authorities. We also access industry resources such as the OLTC, the RHRA, and ORCA.

We must congratulate our staff for their commitment and hard work. They have responded masterfully to the challenges so far. Our staffing levels are good and our recruiting efforts to fill vacancies have never been more aggressive. Staff continue to be restricted to a single-site.

As we communicated in the spring, if a Home experiences a case of COVID-19, special “outbreak” protocols will immediately go into effect, including isolation, deployment of PPE, staff cohorting, and additional restrictions and protocols will be implemented to limit the spread of the infection and help keep all residents and staff members safe. Should such an event occur, there would be special communication to the residents and families of the affected Home. Also note: *if a residents tests positive, we will immediately inform the designated family member(s)*.

To communicate and keep you informed, we will continue to use phone calls and letters from your Administrator or Executive Director. Your Home’s FaceBook page is an excellent way to stay in touch. Also note that we use the Twitter account “@AON_reponds” to share news or important information, as well as the website: <https://aoninc.com/covid19-communications.php>.

As we progress further into Wave 2, please speak with your Administrator or Executive Director if you have questions. Most of all, keep yourself, and your family, healthy. Stay home. Practice physical distancing. Wear a mask. Wash your hands often. And get a flu shot.

Tim Harrold

Tim Harrold, Senior Vice President – AON Inc.