



Weekly Community Update

Week of April 3, 2020

Dear friends and neighbours of Haliburton County,

This week there was tragic news coming out of Pinecrest Nursing Home in our neighbouring community of Bobcaygeon, where many residents and staff have been directly affected by COVID-19. Our thoughts are with the residents, their families, staff, and community during this difficult time.

With two long-term care homes located at HHHS, we want to provide an update on the measures we have taken so far to protect the health and safety of our residents, their families, and our staff teams, as well as some of the additional infrastructure we are creating for our COVID-19 response.

Protecting residents of Highland Wood and Hyland Crest

Since the beginning of March, HHHS has made a number of changes to protect the health and safety of our long-term care residents, including:

- Limiting entry points to our facilities and actively screening all staff and essential visitors (March 13, 2020)
- Cancelling volunteer programs at long-term care homes (March 13, 2020)
- Closing Highland Wood and Hyland Crest to all non-essential visitors (March 14, 2020)
- Implementing a 14-day isolation period for any new long-term care admissions (March 18, 2020)
- Limiting movement of staff between different parts of our facilities, including to/from the long-term care homes, and between hospital and long-term care homes (March 23, 2020)
- Having staff wear masks in all care areas, including during their whole shift in the long-term care homes as well as other clinical and patient areas, and use other personal protective equipment (gowns, gloves) as needed (March 24, 2020)
- Implementing physical distancing measures between long-term care residents and taking residents' temperatures twice daily (April 1, 2020)

We know that these measures, while important, mean that families aren't able to visit with their loved ones at Highland Wood and Hyland Crest. In light of this, our dedicated team of nurses, personal support workers, activationists, and administrators are hard at work making sure residents are able to connect with their families virtually (through video and phone calls, as well as window visits) and have more activities and programming to keep busy with. We've also set up a dedicated information hotline for long-term care families, so they can stay up-to-date with any new changes we make to protect their loved ones.

Creating the right infrastructure to support our COVID-19 response

This past week, HHHS has been focused on ensuring we have the right infrastructure in place to deal with local positive cases of COVID-19.

This includes:

- Partnering in the launch of a Haliburton County COVID-19 Assessment Centre in collaboration with the Haliburton Highlands Family Health Team and the County of Haliburton. This means we will be able to move most testing for COVID-19 outside the hospital and relieve anticipated pressure on our Emergency Departments.
- Launching the HaliburtonCares.ca website, which provide local information about COVID-19 for all Haliburton County residents, including what do you if you are feeling unwell, supports available in the community, a wide range of mental health supports, and ways you can help.
- Further preparations to increase bed capacity and separate COVID-19 needs and patients from non-COVID-19 patients between our facilities in Haliburton and Minden.

This infrastructure is more important than ever, especially after we confirmed our first case of COVID-19 in Haliburton County on April 1, 2020. Thanks to our preparations so far, our team was ready with all of the right protocols and precautions in place to address a local COVID-19 case, and we will continue to make changes and adjust our approach to protect the health and safety of our patients, residents, staff, and community members.

Our thanks go out to every single member of our team – from nurses and physicians to personal support workers, housekeeping staff, dietary staff, mental health and community program/service providers, administrative staff, maintenance, information technology, physiotherapy staff, life enrichment staff, managers, the HHHS Foundation team, and all front-line staff across the County of Haliburton. Everyone is working night and day to keep our community safe, and we are so grateful for your efforts.

Thank you.



Carolyn Plummer
President & CEO