

Pilon, Janet

From: MLTC Correspondence Replies (MLTC) <Replies.MLTC@ontario.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2020 11:33 AM
To: Office of the Mayor
Subject: Response from the Ministry of Long-Term Care (ref: 245-2020-1782)

His Worship Fred Eisenberger
 Mayor, City of Hamilton
 71 Main Street West
 2nd Floor
 Hamilton ON L8P 4Y5
 mayor@hamilton.ca

Dear Mayor Eisenberger:

Thank you for your email sent on July 23rd, 2020, to the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, which was forwarded to the Ministry of Long-Term Care. Please accept our apologies for the delay in responding

We understand that there was a technical issue that resulted in some test results from the Hamilton lab not appearing in the provincial portal/viewer. The issue was unique to the Dave Andreychuk Assessment, and as of July 10th has been resolved. Please note there has been no issue with test processing time nor the delivery of positive test results through local public health.

People tested at the Dave Andreychuk Mountain Arena Assessment Centre and who experienced significant delays in getting their results are advised to contact the Hamilton Family Health Team.

Testing is typically completed within two to three days. Ontario Health helps ensure each assessment centre communicates with patients about how to access their test results. Patients can look for their results on the provincial portal/viewer, contact their family doctor, or reach out to the assessment centre to get their results.

Our government knows that visitor restrictions have been tough on residents, as families and loved ones play an important role in providing care and emotional support to residents.

On July 15, 2020, the ministry updated the restrictions so that up to two people could visit a loved one during an outdoor visit and are no longer required to take a COVID-19 test. On July 22, indoor visits have been allowed for two people at a time. Indoor visitors must verbally attest to a negative COVID test.

All visits continue to be subject to strict health and safety protocols, such as wearing a mask or face covering and complying with a home's infection prevention and control protocols.

These protocols also include physical distancing, which we encourage visitors and residents to practice during their visits, both indoor and outdoor. However, for an indoor visitor who has verbally attested to a negative COVID-19 test within the last 14 days, physical contact could be considered if it will help with the resident's social and emotional well-being.

We ask that homes provide meaningful and equitable access to visits for all residents and consider the staffing and space capacity available to the home to maintain the safety of residents, staff, and visitors. Homes have discretion in scheduling visits but must take into account all directives in place at the time of the decision, and must consider whether visitors are essential caregivers (e.g., supports with feeding, etc.)

Throughout the pandemic, homes have been permitted to admit essential visitors. Essential visitors are a person performing essential support services (e.g., food delivery, inspector, maintenance, or healthcare services (e.g., phlebotomy), a person visiting a very ill or palliative resident. Essential visitors are the only type of visitors allowed when a resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, or when a home is in an outbreak.

We are moving cautiously to balance these essential visits and mitigate risks. Long-term care homes must meet certain conditions to accept visitors.

For additional information on the visitor policy, please visit

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_guidanceltc_resuming_visits.pdf.

We hope you find this information helpful.

Sincerely,

Ministry of Long-Term Care