

**Ministry of Long-Term Care**

Office of the Associate Deputy  
Minister, Long-Term Care Policy  
and Pandemic Response

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**Ministère des Soins de longue durée**

Bureau du sous-ministre associée  
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pandémie pour les soins de longue durée

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April 1, 2022

**MEMORANDUM TO:** Long-Term Care Home Licensees

**FROM:** Erin Hannah  
Associate Deputy Minister  
LTC Policy and Pandemic Response

**SUBJECT:** Vaccination, Testing and PPE supplies

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As the pandemic situation evolves, including the possible resurgence of cases in the context of the BA.2 Omicron subvariant, the Ministry continues to work closely with the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health to respond to the most current scientific evidence.

**Vaccination**

The latest trends continue to show the importance of vaccination as a defense against severe or fatal outcomes among seniors. For example, among the population 80+, unvaccinated individuals are becoming infected and have a higher number of fatal outcomes than those with at least three doses. To boost immune protection, LTC residents should continue to be offered fourth doses. Based on the data reported by 564 homes for the month of February, approximately 94% of residents have received a third dose and approximately 61% of residents have received a fourth dose. We encourage all homes to maintain momentum on resident vaccination, including third and fourth dose boosters, by tracking eligibility based on recommended dose intervals to ensure timely offers and administration. As an additional information tool, the Ministry of Health has released a new guidance document, [Staying Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines](#).

**Asymptomatic Testing**

As you know, asymptomatic testing has been one tool in our collective efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and optimize safety within long-term care homes. Based on the current status of the pandemic, the government has made a commitment to continue to provide free rapid antigen tests to long-term care homes and other high-risk congregate settings through the Provincial Antigen Screening Program (PASP). In addition, auto-shipments of Rapid Antigen tests to long-term care homes will continue for the foreseeable future to support asymptomatic testing and return-to-work approaches.

To support continued auto-shipments, the Ministry is seeking your feedback by way of a brief survey to ensure the appropriate supply is provided to each home. Attached is a document with estimates of RAT kits for each LTC home on a bi-weekly basis, which you will need to refer to when completing the survey. The survey also seeks your feedback on the potential use of at-home testing as an option for long-term care homes. We are asking you to please complete the [survey](#) by April 7, 2022.

### **PPE supplies**

We would also like to remind homes to plan for a sufficient supply of personal protective equipment (PPE), in particular as we anticipate a resurgence of cases in the coming weeks. The Supplementary Stockpile Access Program (SSAP), which provides access to the pandemic PPE stockpile for certain PPE categories, is expected to be extended for a short period of time and we will provide more information in the very near future. In addition, homes continue to have access to the provincial PPE stockpile under emergency provisions. Homes may place an order for PPE from the stockpile through the online ordering [portal](#).

Starting today, the ordering management and inquiries for the pandemic stockpile will be transferred from Ontario Health to the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services (MGCS). You will not see any changes in the process for ordering supplies, which you will continue to do through the [portal](#). If you want to inquire about the status of your order, please contact [SupplyChain.Inquiries@ontario.ca](mailto:SupplyChain.Inquiries@ontario.ca). Attached is an updated Testing and PPE Supplies Reference Sheet.

Thank you for your continued efforts in keeping residents, their families, and staff safe. As always, should you have questions you may contact us at [MLTCPandemicResponse@ontario.ca](mailto:MLTCPandemicResponse@ontario.ca).

Sincerely,

Erin Hannah  
Associate Deputy Minister

### Attachments:

- LTC Rapid Antigen Test Estimates
- Testing and PPE Supplies Reference Sheet
- Fit Testing Resource Supports

c: Nancy Matthews, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC)  
Dr. Catherine Zahn, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health (MOH)  
Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Dr. Barbara Yaffe, Associate Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Alison Blair, Associate Deputy Minister, Pandemic Response and Recovery Division, Ministry of Health (MOH)  
Michael Hillmer, Assistant Deputy Minister, Capacity Planning and Analytics Division, MOH/MLTC  
Lisa Levin, Chief Executive Officer, AdvantAge Ontario

Donna Duncan, Chief Executive Officer, Ontario Long Term Care Association  
Monika Turner, Association of Municipalities of Ontario  
Michael Jacek, Association of Municipalities of Ontario  
Colleen Geiger, President and CEO (Acting), Public Health Ontario  
Jeff Butler, Assistant Deputy Minister, LTC Operations Division, MLTC  
Matthew Anderson, President and CEO, Ontario Health  
Cynthia Martineau, CEO, Home and Community Care Support Services