

Key Messages to Support Residents and Families
Additional Enhanced Measures in LTC Homes
December 28, 2021

- Based on advice of Dr. Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH), the Ministry of Long-Term Care is implementing additional temporary enhanced measures to respond to the rapid increase of COVID cases in both the community and long-term care homes.
- The additional measures will pause general visitors and day outings for social purposes. Designated caregivers continue to be able to come into long-term care homes.
- These additional temporary enhanced measures will be needed for at least six to eight weeks.
- The Ministry will continue work closely with Dr. Moore to review policies and monitor available evidence to inform the ongoing pandemic response.

Questions & Answers

1. What measures are being implemented?

The following measures will be in effect as of December 30, 2021 at 12:01am:

- Access to long-term care homes by general visitors will be paused, including outdoor visits. General visitors will continue to be permitted to enter the home to visit residents receiving end of life care. Designated caregivers will also continue to be permitted entry.
- Day absences for all residents for social purposes will be paused. All essential, medical or compassionate absences will continue to be permitted.

2. Why are further restrictions being implemented in long-term care homes? Ontario continues to see a rapid increase in COVID-19 cases in all Public Health Units. The Omicron variant of concern is more transmissible than previous strains which has resulted in high case counts that will likely mean more outbreaks in long-term care homes and more staff being exposed to or contracting COVID-19. The Ministry recognizes the impact these changes will have on the mental and emotional wellbeing of residents and their loved ones, and as such caregivers will continue to be able to come into long-term care homes. Our collective goal is to keep COVID-19 out of homes wherever possible and prevent spread within homes. Ultimately the most important objective is to prevent severe outcomes for residents and staff.

3. How long will these measures be in place?

The Ministry will continue to work closely with the Chief Medical Officer of Health to review policies and monitor available evidence. At this time, it is anticipated that these additional temporary enhanced measures will be required for at least the next six to eight weeks.