

Non-medical Absences Now Subject to Approval in LTC Homes

Update to Directive #3 for Long-Term Care Homes in York Region as of October 19, 2020

On October 16, 2020, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health updated [Directive #3 for Long-Term Care Homes](#) under the *Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007*. The new update adds new restrictions on absences from a long-term care home (LTCH):

- All non-medical absences need to be approved by the LTCH. In the event of an outbreak in the LTCH, all non-essential absences should be discontinued
- For non-medical absences, the resident or substitute decision maker must make an absence request to the LTCH
- For LTCH located in public health unit jurisdictions where there is evidence of widespread community transmission as per provincial direction, absences are not permitted except for medical or compassionate reasons
- LTCHs cannot deny a resident's request to leave the LTCH for medical visits
- Residents whose request for an absence is denied but wish to go outside must be told to remain on the LTCH's property and maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from any other resident or staff on the property

LTCH must review for approval all non-medical absence requests based on a case-by-case risk assessment considering, but not limited to, the following:

- The LTCH's ability to support self-isolation for 14 days upon the resident's return
- Local disease transmission and activity
- The risk associated with the planned activities that will be undertaken by the resident while out of the LTCH
- The resident's ability to comply with local and provincial policies/ bylaws
- Any further direction provided by the Ministry of Long-Term Care

As COVID-19 cases rise in a number of regions in Ontario, we must take every precaution to limit the opportunities for COVID-19 to enter LTCH.

Contact York Region Public Health

If you have any questions, call our dedicated health professional COVID-19 line at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 77280 (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., seven days a week, after hours call 905-953-6478). Continue to visit york.ca/healthprofessionals, york.ca/covid19 and Ontario.ca/covid19 for up to date information on COVID-19.

