

Policy & Procedure Manual

Revision Date: November 26, 2024

Program: Infection Prevention & Control (IP&C)

Index Number: IP&C-29

Policy: Essential Caregiver & General Visitors Policy

Page 1 of 4

Approved: Susan Brant

Effective: July 1, 2021

1. POLICY

This program is designed to ensure residents can safely visit with general visitors and essential caregivers following all applicable infection, prevention, and control (IPAC) practices. This policy includes the following procedures for all visitors:

- Passive Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) screening
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements and educational resources for reference
- Mandatory masking (if applicable) and the availability/suggestion of masking
- Visitation restrictions

This policy was developed with guidance from Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington Public Health (KFL&A PH) and the Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC).

This policy may change frequently due to numerous changes in ARI limitations and restrictions set out by Fairmount Home (Home).

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all visitors and essential caregivers entering the Home that are not a student, volunteer, employee or entering the Home for purposes not related to employment.

3. OBJECTIVE

To support long-term care residents, the MLTC has provided the following principles to guide resident visits:

Safety: Any approach to visiting must balance the health and safety needs of residents, staff, essential caregivers, and visitors to ensure risks are mitigated

Emotional Well-being: Allowing essential caregivers and visitors is intended to support the emotional well-being of residents by reducing any potential negative impacts related to social isolation

Equitable Access: All residents must be given equitable access to receive visits, both essential caregivers and general visitors, consistent with their preferences and within reasonable restrictions that safeguard residents

Flexibility: The physical/infrastructure characteristics of the Home, its staff availability, whether the Home is in an outbreak, and the current status of the Home with respect to personal protective equipment (PPE) are all variables to take into account when setting the Home's policies

Equality: Residents, their substitute decision-makers and/or designated essential caregivers have the right to choose their visitors.

DEFINITIONS

Essential Caregiver: a person performing essential support services (i.e., food delivery, inspector, maintenance, or health care service) or a person visiting a very ill or palliative resident. Essential visitors include:

Policy & Procedure Manual

Revision Date: November 26, 2024

Program: Infection Prevention & Control (IP&C)

Index Number: IP&C-29

Policy: Essential Caregiver & General Visitors Policy

Page 2 of 4

Approved:

Effective: July 1, 2021

- a) Support Worker: performs essential services for the Home or for a resident at the Home. (i.e., physician, nurse practitioner, maintenance worker)
- b) Essential Caregiver: designated by the resident and/or their substitute decision maker and is visiting to provide direct care to the resident.
 - i. Essential caregivers must be at least 16 years of age

Please note: Essential caregivers are the only type of visitor allowed when a resident is self-isolating; symptomatic; the Home is experiencing an outbreak, or as directed by KFL&A Public Health.

General Visitor: a person who is not an essential caregiver and is visiting to provide non-essential services and/or for social reasons

Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI): a sudden infection of the respiratory system, typically caused by viruses or bacteria that affects the airways and lungs leading to symptoms like cough, fever, and difficulty breathing.

4. PROCEDURE

4.1. Before Visiting

- All essential caregivers and visitors are expected to review this policy monthly and/or before each visit.
- All essential caregivers and visitors must comply with the Home's IPAC protocols including proper use of face coverings or surgical/respiratory masks and eye protection along with hand-hygiene practices and respiratory etiquette.
- All essential caregivers and general visitors must review the educational resources provided at the front entrance, including proper hand-hygiene technique and proper masking techniques.
- Visitors under the age of 14 must be accompanied by an adult.
- Both essential caregivers and general visitors are required to follow the Home's procedures and may be subject to limitations and restrictions during indoor visits.
- Homemade, restaurant and grocery store food/drink brought by visitors for residents are permitted. Please refer to IP&C-31 Activity Room Refrigerator Policy if the use of the refrigerator is required.
- Please note that essential caregivers are not subject to the same restrictions and limitations as general visitors.

4.2. Screening

- All essential caregivers and visitors are required to complete passive screening before entering the Home for indoor visits. Those who do not pass are asked to delay their visit until they pass screening.

4.3. Vaccination requirements & proof of vaccination

Policy & Procedure Manual

Revision Date: November 26, 2024

Program: Infection Prevention & Control (IP&C)

Index Number: IP&C-29

Policy: Essential Caregiver & General Visitors Policy

Page 3 of 4

Approved:

Effective: July 1, 2021

- Essential caregivers and general visitors are not required to show proof of vaccination prior to entry into the Home.

4.4. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- It is recommended for all essential caregivers and visitors to wear a mask during their visit; however, it is not required.
- Fairmount Home remains a mask-friendly facility and will have masks available at the front entrance of the home.
- All PPE (i.e., masks, gloves, gowns, and eye protection) will be provided by the Home, if required, for in-home visits only.
- All essential caregivers and visitors must wear the required PPE on the designated home areas, if required. This includes the use of masks, eye protection, in addition to gloves and gowns as required in isolated resident rooms. All PPE will be provided by the Home.
- Upon admission, essential caregivers and residents will be provided with a copy of this policy along with donning and doffing sequence sign. Below is a list of PPE guidance that may be helpful:
 - Document - Recommended Steps: Putting on PPE:
<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/ipac/ppe-recommended-steps>
 - Video: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/Videos/l/2021/IPAC-FullPPE-On>
 - Video: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/Videos/l/2021/IPAC-FullPPE-Off>
 - Video: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/Videos/l/2021/IPAC-Handwash>
- If an essential caregiver or general visitor consistently fails to comply with PPE requirements, they may be temporarily suspended from visiting with residents.

4.5. Restrictions

- If a resident is self-isolating or symptomatic and/or when the Home is in an outbreak, essential caregivers may visit.

In addition:

- General visitors are asked to postpone visits to any resident on an outbreak Home Area for the duration of the outbreak.

4.6. Types of Visits

- **Indoor Visits**

- Take place inside the Home
- Both essential caregivers and general visitors are required to follow the Home's procedures and may be subject to limitations and restrictions during indoor visits.

- **Outdoor visits**

**Policy & Procedure Manual****Revision Date: November 26, 2024****Program: Infection Prevention & Control (IP&C)****Index Number: IP&C-29****Policy: Essential Caregiver & General Visitors Policy****Page 4 of 4****Approved:****Effective: July 1, 2021**

- To ensure the health and safety of our residents, outdoor visits may be restricted due to weather conditions.
- **Video visits**
 - Must be prearranged with the Volunteer Coordinator (Ext. 581)

5. Policies Referred

| Index Number | Policy Title |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| IP&C-31 | Activity Room Refrigerator Policy |

Any violations of these rules could be basis for discontinuation of your visit. We understand that visiting your loved one is important to you. We don't anticipate violations will occur but must still make everyone aware.

If you have any questions regarding your visit with a resident or the directions and limitations set out in this policy, please contact our Assistant Director of Care - Infection Prevention & Control at Ext. 516.