

June 10, 2020

Dear Residents, Patients, Families, and Staff:

We wish to provide you an update on the situation at Holy Family Hospital. In addition to the staff member who works in the Long Term Care home, a resident of the Long Term Care home has now also tested positive for COVID-19. As a result, an outbreak has been declared by the Medical Health Officer for the entire Holy Family Hospital campus. Out of precaution for the wellbeing of all residents and patients at Holy Family, we plan to test all residents and patients for COVID-19. Today, staff from Providence Health Care and Vancouver Coastal Health are at Holy Family to collect nasopharyngeal swab specimens from residents and patients. While we hope this is precautionary only, residents and patients testing positive for COVID-19 will be placed on contact and droplet precautions and be confined to their rooms, both for their own safety and the safety of others.

We want to reassure you that every possible step is being taken to protect the health of our residents, patients and staff. We will ensure that all residents and patients continue to receive the high-quality care that they require. All staff will continue to wear appropriate PPE, as before, in order to protect residents, patients and staff at all times. Residents, patients and staff who develop any symptoms of COVID-19, however mild, will receive the care that they need, including testing and guidance from the Medical Health Officer. You may also notice restrictions to group activities, and non-essential services. The outpatient services at Holy Family are canceled until further notice. We will only resume services once we can ensure it is safe to do so.

These precautions prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses, and are standard approaches already used in care facilities during the influenza season. By Public Health order, long-term care facilities in B.C. are not accepting visitors except on compassionate grounds. Further measures for infection control may be implemented at the direction of Providence Health Care and the Medical Health Officer.

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness. It can spread through droplets when a person coughs or sneezes, or touching the virus with your hands and then touching your face before washing your hands. Symptoms of COVID-19 range from mild to severe. These symptoms may include fever, cough, fatigue, runny nose, sore throat, temporary loss of taste and/or smell; and sometimes nausea, vomiting or diarrhea. More severe symptoms can include difficulty breathing or chest pain. While most people experience mild illness, older adults and people with pre-existing medical conditions are at higher risk for severe illness. For further information on COVID-19 visit the Vancouver Coastal Health information page <http://www.vch.ca/covid-19> or call HealthLink BC by dialing 8-1-1.

For families with outstanding questions, requiring emotional support or needing assistance navigating the healthcare system, please contact the VCH/PHC LTC Family Support Line at 1-844-824-2219 or 604-875-4953. Please note that the VCH/PHC LTC Family Support Line cannot provide specific resident status reports. For information regarding a resident in the home, please contact Holy Family Hospital at (604) 321-2661.

Sincerely,



Dr. John Harding, MB BCH BAO, MPH, CCFP, FRCPC
Medical Health Officer & Medical Director, Communicable Disease Control
Vancouver Coastal Health Authority