

July 27, 2020

TO: All Staff, Medical Staff, Contracted Staff at Holy Family Long Term Care

**FROM: Dr. Patty Daly, Chief Medical Officer for VCH and PHC
Karin Olson, Chief Operating Officer, Vice President, Coastal, VCH
Dr. John Harding, Medical Health Officer, VCH**

Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry’s daily public statement and release of information today included the following update on Holy Family’s outbreak:

Facility name	Type of facility	HA	Declared over	Total number of cases	Total number of deaths	Number of resident cases	Number of resident deaths	Number of staff/other cases	Number of staff deaths
Holy Family Hospital	Long term care facility	VCH	No	88	18	53	18	35	0

As the table shows, 53 residents and 35 staff members have been diagnosed with COVID-19 at Holy Family Hospital. There were no new COVID-positive cases recorded for residents since the last update on Friday, but there are two new cases for staff. We are sad to report the passing away of two more residents, bringing the total to 18 since the last update. Our hearts go out to their loved ones, as these are devastating losses for everyone involved.

Three residents remain in hospital, two of whom are COVID positive and one COVID negative; none of them are in the ICU. Two staff members are also in the hospital (not in ICU). We have 22 residents and 27 staff who have been declared “cleared” of their COVID-19 infections.

NOTE: The COVID-status numbers in this update are the ones that are made public through the office of the Provincial Health Officer. We report these official numbers to our residents’ family members and provide them to the media when requested. As staff member at Holy Family LTC, you may hear about more updated numbers that are different than the ones released that day, as there could be a change in the COVID status for residents or staff. For confidentiality reasons, should you have knowledge of new cases or new numbers, please refrain from discussing any such information publicly or within Holy Family (e.g. greeter station, staff room, etc.). We would like to minimize any confusion regarding the latest COVID status and data.

Special Message from Fiona Dalton, President & CEO, PHC :

Dear Holy Family Long Term Care Staff, Medical Staff and Contracted Services Staff:

In case you hadn’t yet heard about it, I wanted to personally make you aware of a media story that ran this morning on CBC Radio’s The Early Edition. The story reported on distressing allegations regarding the treatment and care of a resident who passed away from COVID-19 complications at Holy Family Hospital last month.

As we know, all of you have been going through a lot at Holy Family and you are all doing an amazing job of fighting the outbreak and taking care of our residents. Your efforts are heroic and you deserve as much transparency on this issue as I can provide.

The reporter had first approached us about 10 days ago with allegations she said were from the resident's family member. The original allegations – as communicated to us by the reporter – had included complaints of Indigenous racism toward the resident and toward the family member (after the resident passed away), theft of the family member's loved one's personal possessions, neglectful and bad provision of care to the resident, and Providence's mishandling of the process for informing the family member of the passing away of his loved one and the next steps to transfer the deceased to a funeral home.

Please know that we take these allegations very seriously and are conducting a thorough internal investigation. And without giving away any confidentiality, we can say that we have already had good meetings with the complainant and have addressed many of the allegations to date, and are working through a cooperative and interactive process to address all his concerns.

I have personally met the complainant and had a good conversation with him. He told me how much he admires the Holy Family staff for working under such stress, and that he had no concerns around the care of his loved one when she was alive.

Because of the seriousness of the issues and the importance of ensuring no misleading speculation occurs in the public sphere, the complainant has allowed us consent to be able to say that both parties agree there was **no theft**, only a temporary misplacement of the items, most of which were then found in a locker and returned. Search for one more missing personal item is continuing.

The family member has also affirmed to us that he has **no complaints regarding the care** provision of his loved one while the resident lived at Holy Family, nor any allegation of racism toward the resident, and has further communicated **his admiration of Holy Family's care staff** for their commitment and compassionate care. The main issues are with Providence's alleged mistreatment and disrespect of the family member after the passing away of his loved one. We are absolutely committed to working with him to reconcile and resolve the issue and take whatever steps necessary to fix what we identify needs fixing.

Last week, CBC approached Providence Health Care to comment on the allegations and we provided the reporter with the following statement, not knowing exactly what the final story would be and being constrained by our confidentiality and privacy policies of not providing details on individual cases:

- Providence Health Care has been made aware of disturbing allegations regarding the treatment and care of a specific resident at Holy Family Hospital. We take all such allegations very seriously. The allegations are being addressed through our Patient Care Quality Office, which is working with the client.
- Due to the nature of some of the allegations in this case, we are also ensuring our Indigenous Wellness & Reconciliation Team is involved in addressing and resolving the concerns of family members.
- It's distressing when families' cherished possessions with sentimental value go missing. Without going into confidential details of this case, we believe we're making good progress

to completely resolve this allegation, after the discovery in a storage locker of the resident's missing items.

- Although we are unable to comment publicly to the other specifics of the case due to patient/resident confidentiality and privacy, we are distressed and devastated by the allegations as they are contrary to our values, experience and approach to compassionate and person-centred care in our seniors' homes.
- We have well-defined protocols and processes for the transfer of the deceased person to the proper authority, agency or service. Our review of this case will look at all aspects and identify any gaps and learnings that we need to action to ensure proper procedures and communications are always followed.
- Holy Family long term care has a tremendous history of working closely with families. We are committed to addressing all the issues brought to us by our patients, residents, families and clients, and are committed to a timely resolution of the issues in this case.

I recognize all people related to Holy Family long term care – staff, residents and families – are under a tremendous amount of stress right now due to the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak. These public allegations are upsetting to hear and only worsen the feelings of anxiety, fear and uncertainty that the entire Holy Family community is experiencing right now.

As noted in our above statement, Providence is working closely with the family member to address these allegations and resolve any outstanding issues. I am heartened to hear that although still troubling, the number of original allegations has been reduced and we can focus on the remaining issues as we go forward jointly with the family member.

In the meantime, and as always, I want to thank you for remaining committed to the wellbeing of our residents and families, doing all you can to protect them against COVID-19 and continuing to provide safe and compassionate care to all.

With best wishes,

Fiona Dalton

STAFF SUPPORTS:

Your wellness is important & you are not alone:

- Email: covidwellness&support@providencehealth.bc.ca
- Support Line: 604-806-9925 or ext. 69925
 - Provides call-back option, including evenings and weekends
 - To speak with a colleague who is trained to provide Psychological First Aid (PFA) (this is not a crisis line). The voicemail and email will only be checked Monday-Friday between 0830-1630.
 - Supports include:
 - Virtual/remote availability PHC trained PFA employees/Psychologists
 - More Urgent Emotional Support: Contact EFAP 24/7: 604-872-4929 or 1-800-505-4929
 - PHC Occupational Health & Safety: Contact Sandy Coughlin, OH&S Director – 604-341-6272