

July 4, 2020

**TO: All Staff, Medical Staff and Contracted Services Staff  
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  
Althea Hayden, Medical Health Officer, VCH**

Since we declared the COVID-19 outbreak at Holy Family Long Term Care on June 9, all of you, in partnership with Public Health, have done an incredible amount of work to provide compassionate care, keep residents and staff safe, reduce the spread of the virus and keep families well informed of the latest updates.

Despite these heroic efforts, the outbreak has continued and we need to double down our joint efforts. Forty two residents to date have been diagnosed positive, with 8 passing away. Additionally, 24 staff have so far tested positive (four have fully recovered). This includes 16 staff who tested positive this past week, when testing was offered to all staff. Public Health is expecting additional cases will be identified over the next 1-2 weeks from exposures that have already occurred, but if we all continue to work together to enhance efforts to control the outbreak, there should be a significant decline in cases after those two weeks.

Our top priority is to take all necessary steps to keep staff and residents safe. To do that, VCH and PHC have agreed to a new outbreak management team and structure – led by Public Health – with new resources being added and immediate actions being undertaken to mitigate the further spread of COVID among residents and everyone working at Holy Family LTC. Our new COVID Outbreak team, which continues to include key leaders and supports from PHC, will meet every day and provide you with daily updates on the key actions taking place.

Many changes are happening throughout Holy Family. We want to make sure you understand what is happening and why it is happening:

1. **Testing of all LTC staff who were not tested this past week** – Public health will be calling each staff member and arranging testing for all those who were not tested this past week. Testing of all staff is necessary to ensure we don't miss any cases, regardless of how mild.
2. **Enhanced Staff Screening at the start of each shift** – A more detailed screening process is being implemented to assess staff before they enter Holy Family to ensure all cases of COVID are identified as early as possible, in order to prevent further spread of the virus. No staff should come to work if experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, however mild. Please review symptoms information [here](#). Any staff developing symptoms while on shift should immediately inform their manager/supervisor, safely transition any care, exit the facility, proceed for testing, and then proceed directly home to self-isolate pending the results of the test. **All staff will be compensated when staying off work with symptoms, whether or not they test positive for COVID.** Any staff going for testing will be referred to Public Health to ensure appropriate follow-up.

3. **Decluttering** – Complete decluttering of all staff and patient areas to essential items only (including all upholstered furniture) is occurring this weekend. Decluttering is only temporary, and items will be placed in storage. It is important to facilitate enhanced cleaning, and to reduce items in the environment that could allow for the virus to spread.
4. **Stepped up Infection Prevention & Control (ICP) Initiatives – We are adding more IPC resources to Holy Family**, so we can prioritize ICP/IPAC review/audit of all cleaning products and cleaning processes, and provide ongoing education and support to all staff on appropriate infection control processes.
5. **Suspension of Non-Essential Services** – During the outbreak, it is important to limit the number of people that are in LTC at any given time. For that reason, a number of services may not be available until the outbreak is over. Site and operational leaders will look at other options – including virtual/tele-health – to provide such services. More information will be forthcoming regarding which services may be impacted.

We realize some of these initiatives may be difficult, and we thank you for your support in helping to implement these changes. Our experience in managing other COVID-19 LTC outbreaks in the region has taught us that such steps are necessary, but we cannot have success without the full cooperation and commitment from everyone, working in a focused way on a common goal.

Everyone is impressed by the work done to date by Holy Family staff, medical staff, contracted staff and leadership. And given the impact it has had on health care workers, the effort is inspiring. We also know it's taking its toll on you. PHC has provided important staff supports – including hotels for staff who are concerned about exposing their family members to the COVID-19 virus. There are a number of social and psychological supports you can access. That information is provided below. Thank you for your continued amazing contributions in looking after Holy Family residents and for looking after your colleagues and team mates.

## **STAFF SUPPORTS**

**Your wellness is important & you are not alone:**

- **Email:** [covidwellness&support@providencehealth.bc.ca](mailto: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:**
    - **In-person therapist at Hotels from EFAP Critical Incident Stress Management – (you can go there even if not staying at hotel)**
    - **Virtual/remote availability PHC trained PFA employees/ Psychologists**
  - **More urgent emotional support: Contact EFAP 24/7: 604-872-4929 or 1-800-505-4929**