

HALTON REGION PUBLIC HEALTH • Office of the Medical Officer of Health

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TO: Directors of Care and Administrators of Long-Term Care Homes and Retirement Residences

FROM: Dr. Deepika Lobo, Associate Medical Officer of Health

DATE: May 27, 2022

RE: Guidance for Outbreak Management and Staying Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines

QUICK FACTS

- COVID-19 testing, case and contact management, isolation requirements and outbreak management guidance is available in the [COVID-19 Guidance Long-Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes for Public Health Units](#).
- Please check the Ministry of Health webpage regularly for the most current [Directives](#).
- Get Vaccinated and Stay Up to Date
 - Please refer to the Ministry of Health's [Staying Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines: Recommended Doses](#) document for the definition of "up to date" for COVID-19 vaccines.
 - Up to date means a person has received all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses, including any booster dose(s) when [eligible](#).
 - Protection after a primary COVID-19 vaccine series decreases over time, especially against the Omicron variant of concern.
 - What is considered to be up to date for COVID-19 vaccines will likely need to be modified over time based on availability of new vaccines in the future, potential changes in disease epidemiology and as new evidence on additional booster doses becomes available.

OUTBREAK MANAGEMENT

- COVID-19 vaccine booster doses increase protection against symptomatic infection and severe outcomes at the individual level and help reduce transmission at the population level.
 - Isolate anyone experiencing respiratory symptoms or who has received a new positive test.
 - Resident cases must be isolated and placed on additional precautions to prevent the spread of infection to others in the home, as per [Directive #3](#).
 - Check to ensure residents identified as close contacts are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccinations. Close contacts who are not up to date with their vaccinations have additional isolation requirements as per the [COVID-19 Guidance Long-Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes for Public Health Units](#).
- The mental well-being of residents must be considered when managing outbreaks.
 - Continue to provide communal dining while cohorting contacts at the same table, but increase the physical distancing to ensure those not exposed are at least 2 metres apart.
 - Provide and encourage universal masking throughout the facility.
 - Support resident cases in isolation with appropriate PPE so they may enjoy physically distanced activities such as walks outside.
 - Promote physical distancing within the facility to ensure residents are able to safely enjoy communal spaces and activities.
 - Any additional outbreak precautions that the facility would like to implement (e.g. closure of communal dining) must be discussed with Halton Region Public Health prior to implementation. A holistic risk based approach to outbreak management that considers resident mental health is recommended.