

Hello everyone

Again I'd like to begin by thanking everyone for doing your part in supporting the vulnerable individuals we serve.

This morning the Province made a Declaration of Emergency and as part of that declaration a variety of public and private establishments are required to close. The list includes "all facilities providing indoor recreational programs." We believe the intent was that we should close our day program and respite services.

Therefore, as of end of business today, these programs are officially closed. We have begun already to notify families. The families of people currently at our Respite Homes will be asked to pick up their family member today or tomorrow morning at the latest. The government will be reassessing these orders on March 31 but based on what we do know about the virus it seems most unlikely that things will improve appreciably in the space of two weeks.

Our residential services are of course essential services and they will continue.

However, we are now asking families to put a moratorium on visits (whether its visits of the person to see his family, or visits of the family to the group home or apartment). Team Leaders and Managers are going to begin to contact those families who do visit or receive visits, and ask them to suspend such visits. There are other contact options, including Skype, and our IT Manager (Rose) can provide set-up help if that is necessary.

Under the circumstances, most families will be happy to oblige. A few will not. We have just now authorized a couple of programs to deliver people to their families for a visit, but in neither case will the employee get out of their car, upon arrival. If you see an exception of this kind in the making, you should contact the Covid-19 Command Post.

As of today, group homes are essentially sheltering in place. All non-essential travel even through the local community is to be avoided. Grocery shopping, medical appointments and the like will necessarily continue, but even there we should exercise caution. Supported people do not need to accompany you to the grocery store, and routine check-ups can be cancelled.

People we support who have competitive employment and work independently should be following their employers' guidelines and recommendations. When staff are picking people up from work, the person supported will wash their hands prior to entering the vehicle, or staff will assist the person to use hand sanitizer. If the person does his/her job with the support of a CLDN staff member he or she will not be able to attend work after today.

Other non-essential visitors to group homes and offices should be politely turned away, or preferably their visits should be cancelled in advance (e.g. Footcare, Contractors, Maintenance). Where these things are orchestrated from the office we will make sure this happens.

Moving forward, direct care staff will present the primary risk of infection to the people we support. It would be ideal if the same four or five staff could do all of the work in a group home week after week but that has never been possible and it is certainly not possible now. Foreign travel is no longer a major concern, but in light of today's Declaration, and for our own sake and the sake of our families, we should

all take a second look at any domestic travel that we had planned. Being careful in that regard is also in the interest of the people you support and of your co-workers.

The government has put into place an emergency safety net for workers who come down with the virus or are advised by a doctor or public health official to self-isolate. Our full time employees have a very generous paid sick leave entitlement which they can use in these eventualities, but those few who have used all of their entitlement or who are too new to have earned many days, will receive an ROE at the appropriate time and will then want to contact EI. Paid Sick Leave is not part of our contract with part time staff and the government's recent temporary enhancements to EI are mainly targeted in this direction. Unfortunately, upon review, it is not feasible for the agency to top up EI payments to part time employees who miss work.

Thanks again for your hard work and your perseverance; stay healthy!

Glenn

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