

**DEPARTMENT OF FAMILIES CIRCULAR**

**Date:** June 15, 2020

**CIRCULAR NUMBER:** COVID #2020-99

**Alternate Program(s):**

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**To:** Program Managers/Regional Directors/Community Area Directors

**Subject:** Visitation Restrictions Eased in CLDS Residential Care Facilities

**Replaces:** COVID #2020-81 – PPE Use and Health Management for Visitation in the CLDS Sector

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**Type:**  Policy  
 Procedure  
 Rate  
 Information Only

**Effective Date:** Immediately

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Family and friends are integral to the overall health, well-being and quality of life of Community Living disABILITY Services (CLDS) participants. While preventing the spread of COVID-19 remains a central priority, we must find a long term balance between preventative measures and the benefits of social connections for CLDS participants and their loved ones.

In consultation with public health officials, we will begin easing visiting restrictions to residential care facilities. Effective immediately, indoor and outdoor visits with CLDS participants who live in facilities (i.e., shift-staffed homes or home shares) may resume **only** if the visitor and resident:

- have not been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 or is being tested for COVID-19 with results pending;
- have not been instructed to self-isolate;
- have not travelled outside Manitoba in the last 14 days; and
- do not have any symptoms associated with COVID-19 (i.e., cough, fever, runny nose, sore throat, weakness or headache).

**These criteria apply to all visits (indoor and outdoor) whether they take place at the facility or elsewhere.**

Facility residents may visit their family home. However, CLDS strongly encourages these visits to occur outdoors. Facility residents must meet the screening criteria above when returning to the facility.

All residents and visitors must continue to practice hand hygiene before, during (if possible) and after any visit and maintain physical distancing (two metres or six feet apart) wherever possible. Any personal contact should be brief and kept to a minimum.

### **Indoor visits**

A maximum of **one** visitor may be allowed inside a residential care facility at a time. If two or more residents would like to have a visitor on the same day, the visitors must come at different times.

### **Outdoor visits**

A maximum of **two** visitors may be allowed outside a residential care facility at a time. If two or more residents would like to have outdoor visitors, the total number of visitors cannot exceed two at any given time.

Given that the risk of transmitting the virus is less likely in outdoor settings, CLDS continues to encourage facility visits to occur outside wherever possible. CLDS also encourages the use of alternative means of communication such as video or phone calls, where appropriate.

### **Visiting hours and duration of visits**

Facility operators or staff are responsible for determining visiting hours and the duration of visits. CLDS encourages facility operators or staff to consider evening visitation for some portion of visitor hours, due to visitors' schedules.

### **Personal protective equipment (PPE)**

Agency staff working in shift-staffed group homes are required to wear PPE while indoors, but not outdoors as long as physical distancing can be maintained. Facility residents and visitors are not required to wear PPE indoors or outdoors. The use of a non-medical (i.e., cloth) mask may be used during visits if they choose to do so.

### **Managing risk**

The vulnerability and health risk of facility residents remains an important consideration. Facility operators or staff should seek medical advice prior to arranging in-person visits at facilities with residents who may be at higher risk of contracting COVID-19 or at higher risk of serious illness.

CLDS will continue to consult with public health officials regarding safe visitation as Manitoba's strategy for restoring safe services evolves.

If you have any questions, please contact CLDS Leading Program and Practice Specialists Marylea Mooney at 204-945-3360 or Russ Kathler at 204-945-8183.

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cc: Distribution List