GENERAL VISITOR POLICY & PROCEDURES

POLICY:

The Pines LTC Home is committed to the safety and well-being of all residents, staff, essential caregivers, and visitors. The aim of managing visitors is our way of finding a balance between meeting the needs of our residents, identifying how the 2019 pandemic has potentially affected socialization for all, and the importance of mitigating risk. We are prepared to follow all provincial guidelines concerning general visitors to our home so that we can continue to strive to meet the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical needs of our residents.

Our general visitor policies will include the following and may be amended from time to time:

- The Pines will continue to remain informed of the ongoing Public Health situation including COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses within our community at large, and be flexible with reassessing visiting at the home as circumstances change.
- Our approach at The Pines is based on principles such as safety, emotional well-being, and flexibility, and addresses concepts such as compassion, equity, non-maleficence, proportionality (i.e. the level of risk), transparency and reciprocity (i.e. providing resources to those who are disadvantaged by the policy).
- The Pines will make available, education about physical distancing, respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, infection prevention and control practices (IPAC), and the proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE) (donning/doffing).
- The Pines will continue to support masking for visitors, if they choose, and will continue to follow ongoing Public Health guidance around this. Masking may still be required in some situations. As per Public Health, masking requirements may be subject to change.
- Our home will communicate allowances and limitations regarding visiting options and will include criteria for defining the number and types of visitors allowed per resident when the home is not in an outbreak. **If the home is in an outbreak, only essential visitors will be permitted.**
- Screening protocols will be outlined and will specifically address the fact that visitors must passively screen before the beginning of their visit for symptoms of COVID-19 and other respiratory or infectious diseases and not attend the home if symptoms are present. **Please review the screening questions posted at the front entrance before entering the home**.

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- The policies and procedures will state that non-compliance with the home's processes could result in a discontinuation of visits for the non-compliant visitor.
- Communication by the home to all residents, staff, essential caregivers, and visitors, will be an ongoing priority and will remain transparent, informative, and consistent.

DEFINITION:

A general visitor is a person who is not an essential visitor and is visiting to provide non-essential services related to either the operations of the home or a particular resident or group of residents. General visitors include those persons visiting for social reasons as well as visitors providing non-essential services such as personal care services, entertainment, or individuals touring the home.

PROCEDURES:

The role that families, visitors, and loved ones play in providing caregiving and emotional support is important in the quality of life for long-term care residents. The Pines LTC Home has prepared the following guidelines and expectations in line with the Ministry's principles:

Safety: Any approach to visiting The Pines must consider balance to meet the health and safety needs of residents, staff, and visitors, and ensure risks are mitigated.

Emotional Well-being: Allowing visitors is intended to support the emotional well-being of residents and their families/friends, through reducing any potential negative impacts related to social isolation.

Equitable Access: All individuals seeking to visit a resident will be given equitable visitation access, consistent with resident preference and within reasonable restrictions that safeguard residents. The Pines will provide meaningful and equitable access to visits for all residents.

Flexibility: The physical/infrastructure characteristics of the long-term care home, its staffing availability, and the status of the home concerning Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) levels for staff and residents.

Equality: Residents have the right to choose their visitors. In addition, residents, or their substitute decision-makers, as applicable, have the authority to designate essential caregivers.

**Visitors should consider their own personal health and susceptibility to communicable diseases in determining whether visiting a long-term care home is appropriate. Where it is not possible or advisable for in-person visits, homes should continue to provide virtual visiting options. The directives regarding visits at long-term care homes have been adjusted while we strive to continually keep the safety and emotional well-being of residents and staff at the forefront.

General Visitor Procedure:

- No limits related to indoor and/or outdoor visits, but please ensure that if you have more than five (5) visitors attending you update the staff ahead. This way we can ensure that we provide a space for you to visit with your loved one to enjoy your visit.
- General visitors younger than fourteen (14) years of age must be accompanied by an adult.
- Children (2) two years of age and older are subject to The Ministry of Long-Term Care Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines and current Public Health guidance, and outbreak guidelines; if applicable.
- When entering the main door vestibule, thoroughly clean your hands with the available hand sanitizer.
- Visitors must continue to sign in when entering the home using the iPad located to the left as you enter the front door of the home. Following section 267(2) of O. Reg. 246/22, homes must maintain visitor logs of all visits to the home. The visitor log must include, at a minimum:
    - The name and contact information of the visitor;
    - The purpose of the visit (for example, the name of the resident visited);
- If the home happens to be in Outbreak, please follow the appropriate guidelines as posted at the front entry or the entrance to the resident's home area. **General visitors are not allowed in the Outbreak Home Area. Please connect with the home prior to visiting to check on the current status**.
- An information package will be made available to all visitors which includes, but is not limited to infection prevention and control (IPAC), masking, visitor's mandatory compliance with processes, hand hygiene, maintenance of the highest level of IPAC standards before, during and after visits;
    - Public Health Ontario Resources
        - Recommended Steps: Putting on Personal Protective Equipment
        - Video: Putting on full personal protective equipment
        - Video: Taking off full personal protective equipment
        - Video: How to hand wash
        - Video: How to hand rub
- All visitors must comply with The Pines IPAC protocols, including the proper use of face or surgical/procedural masks, if required.
- Visitors can eat and drink with the residents at this time. Meals with your loved one will take place outside of the dining room at the designated table. Please connect with the front office if you would like to enjoy a Pines meal. This should be done at least 24 hours in advance.

PALLIATIVE CARE AND EMERGENCY SITUATIONS:

- Despite the requirements set out in this policy, the requirements for Support Workers, Essential Caregivers, and General Visitors **do not** need to be followed in an emergency or palliative/end-of-life situation. These visits are still subject to IPAC, restrictions, and requirements contained in the Minister's Directive: COVID-19 response measures for long-term care homes as issued by the Chief Medical

Officer of Health.

Ending a Visit:

- The Pines has the discretion to end a visit by any essential caregiver/visitor who repeatedly fails to adhere to the rules, policies, and procedures, provided:
    - The Pines has explained the applicable requirements to the essential caregiver/visitor;
    - The visitor has the resources to adhere to the requirements; and,
    - The essential caregiver/visitor has been given sufficient time to adhere to the requirements;
    - The home will document all non-compliance, as well as any/all follow-up actions associated with the non-compliance and re-entry.

Responding to Non-Adherence by Visitors:

- Failure to follow this policy, the home will provide additional clarity to support visitors and rationale for adhering to all rules, policies, and procedures.
- Any non-compliance with rules, policies, and procedures will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and may require that individuals complete additional Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) education before being allowed re-entry into the home.

TEMPORARILY PROHIBITING A VISITOR

- The Pines has the discretion to temporarily prohibit an essential caregiver/visitor in response to repeated non-adherence with the home's rules, policies, and procedures.
- The Pines will reinstate the visits:
    - If the essential caregiver/visitor can demonstrate how they plan to adhere to the requirements;
    - And in consideration any negative impact on staff and resident's health and safety when prohibiting a visit has been alleviated;
    - And consideration on the previous non-compliance of the individual(s) when prohibiting a visit is not expected to recur;
- Decisions to prohibit visitors will:
    - Be made only after all other reasonable efforts to maintain safety during visits have been exhausted;
    - Stipulate a reasonable length of the prohibition;
    - Identify what requirements the visitor should meet before visits may be resumed; and,
    - Be documented by the Home.