

On April 29, Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) released new orders for continuing care that provided guidance on '**Outdoor Access**' for residents and '**Outdoor Visits**' with residents and families.

This new guidance recognizes that it is important for mental health to spend time outdoors. It encourages that residents be given an opportunity to spend time outdoors, where feasible and appropriate, and have the opportunity for safe outdoor visits.

The Brenda Strafford Foundation welcomes this new guidance from Alberta Health. We have advocated for and strongly encouraged these important measures to support enhanced quality of life, balanced with the necessary restrictions that are in place for increased safety and protection of our residents.

### **We are pleased to announce the introduction of Outdoor Visits with Residents and Families!**

**Outdoor visits will be starting as early as next week.** The Ministry of Health has acknowledged the complexity of the order and advised operators to take the necessary time to review, interpret and make plans for implementation. The Brenda Strafford Foundation is working hard to quickly – but also safely – finalize the plans and set-up the outdoor spaces for each site to be able to implement outdoor visits in accordance with the guidelines from the CMOH order, while keeping the protection of residents, families and staff at the forefront.

More information will be provided early next week to advise the specific instructions and scheduling information for outdoor visits. Each Manor will be communicating their site-specific instructions and scheduling arrangements to residents and families early next week. Thank you for your continued patience as we implement this welcome and highly anticipated new initiative.

### **In the meantime, here is an overview of some key information we can share at this time:**

- Visits will be scheduled in advance to ensure fair access for everyone, compliance to the physical distancing and safety requirements, and that dedicated staff are available to support the visits.
- Outdoor visits are limited to groups of 3 people, including two visitors and the resident.
- As we introduce these outdoor visits, they will initially be limited to 15 minutes and 2 per month. The timelines and frequencies of these visits may be revised at a later date.
- Designated outdoor spaces are being created that will help to ensure required physical distancing is maintained.
- All visits will be weather dependent and a notice will be sent out in the event that visits are being cancelled.
- Sites will provide outdoor shelter and will also provide residents with sunscreen, hats, umbrellas and blankets as needed for comfort and protection based on the weather conditions.
- If a resident is on isolation precautions, outdoor visits will not be permitted for those residents. We will not permit visits for residents that would have to travel across an outbreak neighborhood to access the outdoors.

### **A checklist for key safety considerations includes:**

- Schedule a visit prior to coming.
- Assess your health prior to the visit and do not visit if you are experiencing any symptoms of illness, or if you have been in close contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- Check in to the screener desk prior upon arrival at the designated outdoor areas.
- Wear a mask at all times during the visit. Residents will also be asked to wear a mask (if tolerated). Masks will be provided and staff can assist visitors in putting on and taking off masks safely.
- Complete hand hygiene before and after the visit. Hand sanitizer will be provided.

Staff will help to monitor these interactions and those that do not comply will be asked to leave.

**OUR RESPONSE TO THE CORONAVIRUS: COVID-19  
SPECIAL BULLETIN #9: MAY 2, 2020 FOR RESIDENTS, FAMILIES & VISITORS**

The Brenda Strafford Foundation will continue to facilitate 'Virtual Visits' and 'Window Visits,' as often as it is feasible to do so, in addition to commencing offering 'Outdoor Visits.'

**Outdoor Access for Residents**

As you know, previously, the direction from provincial authorities restricted all residents from going outdoors when a facility was in any level of outbreak.

Now, we are pleased to report that the new order from the CMOH permits that residents who are not required to isolate may spend time outdoors while observing physical/social distancing requirements.

With the warmer weather upon us, effective immediately, residents will once again now be encouraged to spend time outdoors to enjoy the benefits of fresh air and sunshine. Staff will help to facilitate residents spending time outdoors, in cases where residents may be unable to do so independently and require assistance.

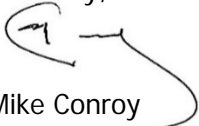
**Some guidelines for spending time outdoors includes:**

- Residents must remain on the property when spending time outdoors, residents are not able to leave the property for off-site walks or outings when going outdoors.
- Residents may spend time outdoors on balconies. This includes private balconies from their suites if applicable, or public balconies in common spaces adhering to physical distancing requirements.
- Residents must not conduct 'Outdoor Visits' with families/visitors from their balconies. All 'Outdoor Visits' must be facilitated through the Outdoor Visit program.

We know these are important developments for our residents and families. We are pleased to be able to further support our mission to optimize well-being and enrich lives within the unusual challenges we all face at this time. Thank you for your patience as we ensure these developments are implemented in a timely but safe way that continues to minimize the risk and prevents the potential occurrence of COVID-19 within our Manors.

As always, we appreciate your continued understanding and support during these difficult times. Together, we will remain BSF Strong!

Sincerely,



Mike Conroy  
President and CEO