

COVID-19 Situational Update at The Brenda Strafford Foundation

July 15, 2020

Dear residents and families,

The Brenda Strafford Foundation is pleased to report that all four of our sites have remained COVID-19 free since the last outbreak at one of our sites was declared over on June 18.

We are also pleased to observe the number of cases in continuing care sites reported to be in outbreak in Alberta declining and stabilizing. There are currently 22 active cases of COVID-19 at continuing care centres in Alberta, and five continuing care sites are reported to be on outbreak in the province. While this is an encouraging trend, the occurrence of COVID-19 continues to be a very real threat for senior residents in continuing care. Our senior residents are, unfortunately, the population still at greatest risk for the most severe outcomes of this deadly virus.

As more businesses and services reopen and activities increase in the broader community, the continuing care sector must remain prepared for outbreaks to continue to occur. The Foundation remains focussed on ensuring our employees are informed and supported to stay healthy, safe and avoid the risk of transmission in the community, as much as possible. As a society, we must all remain vigilant in the prevention of COVID-19 entering continuing care sites and continue to protect our society's most vulnerable.

While we are focussed on these enhanced health and safety prevention measures at this time, our value of '*People First*' remains very much at our core. People are always at the centre of everything we do. We are constantly monitoring and evaluating the risks and restrictions in place for our residents and families to ensure these risks and restrictions are appropriately balanced with quality of life. We must also continue to adhere to the operational restrictions and requirements that are mandated by the Orders of Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH).

We know that residents and families are anxious to see their loved ones in-person again and with less restrictions on visitation. We understand this desire, and The Foundation also supports increased visitation – *safely* – with the appropriate considerations for risk management still in place.

Last month, Dr. Deena Hinshaw and the Government of Alberta hosted Virtual Town Hall meetings to seek feedback from continuing care residents, families and operators to inform their consideration of potential changes to the visitation policies outlined in the CMOH Order. An announcement and revised CMOH Order in this regard is expected this week on July 16. At this time, operators will be given a timeframe to implement a plan for any changes to the visitation policies in accordance with the new order. We look forward to receiving this anticipated new guidance from the Chief Medical Officer of Health, and The Foundation will schedule a Virtual Town Hall Meeting next week in addition to releasing a written information bulletin at that time. Please stay tuned for more details to follow and we appreciate your patience and cooperation.

In the meantime, I would once again like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the continued compassion, commitment and courage of all our employees and leadership team throughout the entire Foundation in response to this pandemic. I would also like to acknowledge the ongoing resilience, understanding and support of our residents and families at all of our sites at this most difficult time for everyone.

Together, we remain BSF Strong!



Mike Conroy
President and CEO

