

February 26, 2021

Dear Dom Lipa Families, Friends, Employees and Supporters,

In this communication, we share with you the good news that the Covid-19 outbreak is over. We remind everyone that we must all remain vigilant in following masking, hand washing and physical distancing guidelines, with the increase of Covid-19 variants in the community.

Covid-19 Outbreak Over

The Covid-19 outbreak declared on February 8th is now declared over, as of February 25th, 2021. There are no new cases, no new symptomatic staff/residents and all February 22nd facility-wide testing for Covid-19 returned negative. All four resident cases (1 in Long-Term Care and 3 in the Retirement Home) are now resolved. Of the three positive staff cases, 2 are resolved and they have returned to work. One staff member is not working, while awaiting clearance from Toronto Public Health.

Thank you to staff, essential caregivers and residents for being diligent with handwashing, wearing masks and following infection prevention guidelines to severely limit the impact of this outbreak.

This is the sixth outbreak of Covid-19 since the start of the pandemic one year ago. While we have learned much over the course of the past year, it is inevitable that Dom Lipa, along with other communal living settings, will experience more outbreak situations. Infection control experts from Toronto-area hospitals report that vaccinated seniors infected with Covid-19 are less sick and do not need hospital care as often, as compared to those who have not been vaccinated (the research is not yet published).

Toronto Public Health now allows residents to resume meals in dining rooms with the following measures to ensure the safety of residents:

- group residents from the same floor/unit, during meals.
- provide multiple sittings for meals to reduce resident numbers at one time.
- space dining tables at least 3 metres apart.
- place resident seating 2 metres or more apart at the same dining table.
- clean the dining room between groups, especially high-touch surfaces.

Based on our discussions with Toronto Public Health, we continue to use recommended control measures which include:

- Follow best practice for environmental cleaning, including cleaning of resident environments after discontinuation of droplet/contact precaution and cleaning of common areas.

- Continue infection control practices for staff, volunteers, and essential visitors including routine practices such as risk assessments, hand hygiene, and wearing personal protective equipment (referred to as 'PPE').
- Staff continue to monitor previously positive residents for new symptoms and consider testing to rule out subsequent infection from other pathogens. Discuss with Public Health any cleared resident, who develops new symptoms.
- Cleared staff that return to work are to continue following universal masking recommendations, maintain physical distancing (greater than 2 metres from others), except when providing care with hand hygiene and PPE use.
- Ongoing audits to strengthen hand hygiene, proper use of PPE and other routine infection control precautions.

Delay in the Start of Rapid Antigen Testing

The start of Rapid Antigen Testing was delayed by the outbreak, and we hope to begin in the next few weeks.

In our last communication, we announced that Rapid Antigen Testing (rather than PCR testing) will be performed for Essential Visitors upon every entry. This takes approximately 15 minutes.

New guidelines require Essential Caregivers (EC) be tested at the same rate as employees. For ECs entering every day, according to their declared schedule, the testing will take place every other day. For ECs entering on random days, testing will take place every time, when entering (whether they have entered on two consecutive days or not).

Updates and Ministry FAQ documents are posted on www.domlipa.ca.

Continuing to Stay Vigilant

Most infectious diseases physicians predict that at least one of the new variants will soon become the dominant strain of COVID-19 within Ontario. Some of the new variants are more infectious than the native COVID-19 strain. Knowing this, we must remain attentive and continue to follow public health guidelines.

Thank you for your continuing good wishes and support!

Please continue to stay safe and stay healthy!

Sincerely,

The Board of Directors of the Slovenian Linden Foundation – Dom Lipa

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