

# Coronavirus COVID-19

2020-05-14

2020-05-26

We would like to provide you with new information and instructions regarding the informal and family caregivers of residents of residential and long-term care centres (CHSLDs), individuals in the care of intermediate and family-type resources (IR-FTRs), and residents of private seniors' residences (PSRs).

As of May 11, 2020, **subject to specific conditions**, it will be possible for informal and family caregivers to provide primary assistance or support to individuals in CHSLDs, IR-FTRs, and PSRs.

This will be subject to compliance with certain precautions to balance the associated risks and benefits.

CHSLDs, IR-FTRs, and PSRs that wish to be excluded from these new directives in whole or in part will need prior authorization from Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS).

## **RELAXED MEASURES FOR INFORMAL AND FAMILY CAREGIVERS PROVIDING PRIMARY ASSISTANCE OR SUPPORT IN CHSLDs, IR-FTRs, and PSRs**

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### **1. Clarifications regarding informal or family caregivers providing primary assistance or support:**

- Informal or family caregivers allowed in CHSLDs, IR-FTRs, and PSRs are people **who were providing or who want to provide** primary assistance or support to meet a loved one's needs and help ensure their well-being.
- **There can be more than one informal or family caregiver providing the same person with primary assistance and support in a residential facility. However, only one of the resident's informal or family caregivers is allowed in the facility at a time.**
- **Support is considered primary** if it is provided regularly to meet a loved one's needs and help ensure their well-being.
- Informal and family caregivers may assist loved ones with meals, monitor and track their general condition, help with their daily routine or recreational activities, go for walks with them, or provide moral comfort and support.

- As long as they comply with the usual requirements for visits and any special instructions at the facility, informal or family caregivers can decide for themselves when, how often, and for how long to visit their loved one.
- CHSLDs, IR-FTRs, and PSRs that wish to be excluded from these new directives in whole or in part **must document and justify that decision** and will need prior authorization from Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS).

## 2. Get the informal or family caregiver's consent

- The informal or family caregiver must sign a form stating that:
  - a. They are making an informed and voluntary decision with full knowledge of the risks involved, including the chance that they may become infected during visits and that they may infect their loved one
  - b. They undertake to do what is required to ensure their own safety and the safety of the resident they support, other residents, and staff members
- The signed consent form must be placed in the CHSLD resident's file or in the establishment's file for IR-FTR patients. For informal and family caregivers in PSRs, the form must be given to the PSR managers, who must keep a copy.
- Give informal and family caregivers the leaflet made for them about this directive and encourage them to visit the Québec.ca webpage for informal and family caregivers at <https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus/caregivers-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>.

## 3. Make sure the informal or family caregiver complies with the following instructions

### 3.1 Regarding isolation, symptom monitoring, and screening:

- If you are isolating (for example, due to close contact with a COVID-19 case), do not go to a CHSLD, IR-FTR, or PSR until your isolation is over.
- Be asymptomatic or have recovered from COVID-19 within 14 days of the onset of symptoms, have had no acute symptoms for 24 hours except for residual cough and persistent loss of sense of smell, and have had no fever for 48 hours without taking antipyretics. After recovering, **you can ask to be tested, if you want, for a negative result** before returning to a CHSLD, IR-FTR, or PSR or a unit in these settings where there is no confirmed case of COVID-19.
- Monitor yourself for symptoms. As soon as any symptoms appear, stop going to the CHSLD, IR-FTR, or PSR (see appendix for symptoms).
- **Informal or family caregivers who want to be screened can ask for a test at the facility or arrange for one themselves.**

### 3.2. Protection and infection prevention measures:

- Read the information provided on symptom monitoring, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and use of personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Perform hand hygiene when entering and exiting the CHSLD, IR-FTR, or PSR and when entering and exiting the resident's room and the hot zone if applicable.
- Put on a medical mask properly upon entry to the CHSLD, IR-FTR, or PSR and wear it throughout the visit. The medical mask cannot be reused for a subsequent visit.
- Use appropriate PPE for the type of care provided and the resident's condition (exposure to a confirmed case or unit with confirmed cases = full PPE/exposure to an unconfirmed and symptom-free resident = medical mask only). With the exception of the medical mask, PPE must be removed before leaving the hot zone.
- Do not bring any clothing or items from home (purse, lunch bag, documents, etc.) into the CHSLD, IR-FTR, or PSR that will be brought home afterwards.
- Be aware that only one informal or family caregiver may care for a resident at a time. This rule applies at all times without exception in CHSLDs, especially if two residents share a room. However, it may be adjusted if two residents live in the same PSR or IR-FTR unit and receive primary support from the same informal or family caregiver.
- Come in clean clothing and change and wash your clothes when you get home (regular cycle).

### 3.3 Movement within the CHSLD, IR-FTR, or PSR:

- Go directly to and from the resident's room or unit only.
- Keep at least two metres away from other people when going to the resident's room or unit.
- Keep at least two metres away from staff members and other informal and family caregivers.
- Stay out of the common areas of the CHSLD, IR-FTR, or PSR at all times.
- Stay out of equipment storage areas.
- Leave the room if aerosol-generating medical procedures are performed. Return to the room after the required number of air changes (the number may vary depending on the setting).
- Minimize any out-of-home travel other than travel to the long-term care facility, IR-FTR, or PSR.
- Only use washrooms designated for caregivers and follow the health precautions and instructions. For example, do not use washrooms in the hot zone.

#### 4. CHSLD, IR-FTR,<sup>1</sup> and PSR responsibilities:

- Maintain a log of informal and family caregivers and visit dates to facilitate contact tracing, if necessary.
- Meet the informal or family caregiver on arrival and provide them with assistance if needed.
- To prevent contact between informal or family caregivers as much as possible, they can be assigned an arrival time according to when they want to visit. The same precautions can be implemented for when they leave the facility.
- Offer informal or family caregivers as much visiting time as possible, in compliance with the usual requirements.
- The number of new informal or family caregivers can be adjusted in line with the residential facility's capacity and specific circumstances (number of infected cases or employees absent).
- Provide informal and family caregivers with available information tools on how to perform a screening test, symptoms to monitor (usual and atypical), basic hygiene measures (hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette), and PPE use according to the type of support provided and the resident's condition.
- Give them PPE (medical mask, eye protection, gown, gloves, if applicable) and ensure they use it properly.
- Tell informal and family caregivers that MSSS and Institut national de santé publique du Québec have issued directives to limit the spread of COVID-19, and this may result in changes to the organization and delivery of care and services. (This is the responsibility of the CISSS/CIUSSS for IR-FTR patients).
- Ensure that recommended hygiene and sanitation measures are applied by all CHSLD, IR-FTR, or PSR staff, with special attention to (more frequent cleaning of) "high-touch" areas such as door handles and light switches.
- Provide a container inside the hot zone for PPE removed prior to exiting the zone.
- Ensure that hand hygiene can be performed when exiting the room.
- Include informal and family caregivers in planned infection prevention and control (IPC) and hand hygiene audit processes.
- Put policies in place to minimize contact between informal and family caregivers as much as possible. For example, schedules can be assigned to prevent gathering upon arrival and departure from the CHSLD, IR-FTR, or PSR.
- Continue to provide access to phones and various communication technologies so that residents and their loved ones can stay in touch.

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<sup>1</sup>The institutions must continue to abide by the agreements entered into with the IR-FTRs.

## 5. Handling concerns or disagreements about the interpretation and application of ministerial guidelines

- Appoint a manager or designated person at the CHSLD, IR-FTR, or PSR to answer questions and deal with concerns from informal or family caregivers about the interpretation and application of ministerial directives. The manager or designated person at the residence must:
  - Assess the situation from a neutral point of view, meaning they must not be directly involved in the concern or disagreement expressed by the informal or family caregiver
  - Think about and suggest possible solutions that are acceptable to everyone involved
  - Make sure informal or family caregivers know about the role of the manager or designated person at the residence and provide their contact information
  - When concerns or disagreements cannot be resolved, direct informal or family caregivers to the service quality and complaints commissioner in accordance with the institution's complaints procedure and with full confidentiality.

## 6. Useful references

- Order 2020-034 of the Minister of Health and Social Services dated May 9, 2020  
[https://cdn-contenu.quebec.ca/cdn-contenu/adm/min/sante-services-sociaux/publications-adm/lois-reglements/AM\\_numero\\_2020-034-anglais.pdf?1589125930](https://cdn-contenu.quebec.ca/cdn-contenu/adm/min/sante-services-sociaux/publications-adm/lois-reglements/AM_numero_2020-034-anglais.pdf?1589125930)
- Informal and family caregivers during the pandemic \_  
<https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus/caregivers-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>
- Information sheet for informal and family caregivers whose loved one is institutionalized  
<https://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/msss/en/document-002529/>
- General information sheet for informal and family caregivers\_  
<https://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/msss/document-002513/>
- Toolkit for identifying individuals at risk of psychosocial vulnerability\_  
[https://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/msss/document-002505/ \(in French\)](https://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/msss/document-002505/)

## APPENDIX 1: Symptom Self-Monitoring Chart

### COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

Asymptomatic

Date of onset of symptoms\*: \_\_\_\_\_ YYYY-MM-DD

<b>Symptoms associated with the COVID-19 episode</b>			
Recent cough or exacerbation (worsening) of a chronic cough	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Fever ( $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ or $100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$ ; elderly $\geq 37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ or $100.0^{\circ}\text{F}$ )	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Feverishness/chills (temperature not taken)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Sore throat	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Runny nose	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Difficulty breathing (e.g., shortness of breath or difficulty speaking)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Nausea and vomiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Headache	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Overall weakness	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Pain (muscular, thoracic, abdominal, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Irritability and confusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Diarrhea	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Sudden loss of sense of smell (anosmia) without nasal obstruction, with or without loss of taste (ageusia)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Other (specify): _____			