

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

December 16, 2020

INFORMATION ABOUT MEASURES THAT APPLY TO FAMILIES AND INFORMAL CAREGIVERS OF RESIDENTS OF A CENTRE D'HÉBERGEMENT ET DE SOINS DE LONGUE DURÉE (CHSLD) NURSING HOME OR INTERMEDIATE RESOURCE (RI) FOR SENIORS OF AT LEAST 20 PLACES, INCLUDING DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Due to the current epidemiological situation in Québec and to slow the spread of COVID-19, it is recommended to restrict access to a small number of caregivers and visitors for vulnerable residents of facilities at every level of alert.

These directives are based on a reference timeline between **December 17, 2020 and January 11, 2021, inclusively**. However, these measures could be extended beyond January 11, 2021, depending on how the epidemiological situation evolves.

The following infection prevention and control measures apply at all times in the above facilities:

- Two-metre physical distancing
- Hand-washing
- Availability of all required personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Procedure masks worn at all times

The following informal caregiver and visitor definitions will make it easier to understand and implement instructions:

Informal caregiver:

Someone who regularly or occasionally supports a person in their close circle that is disabled either temporarily or permanently and with whom a family or non-family emotional relationship exists. In this case, **support is provided on a non-professional basis irrespective of age, living environment or type of disability (physical, psychological, psychosocial or other)** of the supported individual. This care can take various forms, such as help with personal hygiene, emotional support or coordinating care and services.

This means that close friends, immediate family members and informal caregivers need access to the care receiver's living environment.

More specifically, for the December 17, 2020 to January 11, 2021 holiday season and in orange and red alert levels at living environments with COVID-19 outbreaks, only those informal caregivers known to the authorities of the facility and who are familiar with mandatory personal hygiene instructions will be authorized to enter.

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Visitor:

Someone who is not a member of the close or immediate family, does not fit the definition of an informal caregiver, and wishes to visit a resident. This could be an infrequent acquaintance of the resident who is not essential to that individual's physical and/or psychological well-being.

INSTRUCTIONS RELATING TO VISITS BY INFORMAL CAREGIVERS TO CHSLDs OR INTERMEDIATE RESOURCES FOR SENIORS OF AT LEAST 20 PLACES DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Access by informal caregivers to a CHSLD or RI for seniors of at least 20 places will vary on the basis of the alert level in the region where the facility is located. Alert levels are set for given areas on the basis of recommendations by public health authorities, who regularly review the status to take account of the factual epidemiological situation, transmission control and healthcare system capacity.

More information on your current alert level is available on the [Progressive regional alert and intervention system \(COVID-19\)](#) web page.

Over and above any applicable alert levels, additional measures may be taken when there is an outbreak at a CHSLD or RI for seniors with at least 20 places, or when the recipient of care is in quarantine.

The maximum number of known informal caregivers at a given facility for a given patient is set in accordance with the following:

CHSLD or RI for seniors
with at least 20 places
(orange level)

- **Access:** No more than 2 informal caregivers/family members **known to the authorities of the facility** in any 24-hour period
- **Outside gatherings not allowed:** Encourage visits to the facility by informal caregivers

CHSLD or RI for seniors
with at least 20 places
(red level)

- **Access :** No more than 1 informal caregiver/family member **known to the authorities of the facility** in any 24-hour period
- **Outside gatherings not allowed:** Encourage visits to the facility by informal caregivers

1. General instructions

- Monitoring visitors to a CHSLD or RI for seniors with at least 20 places requires criteria for exclusion based on COVID-19 symptoms. These criteria for exclusion are as follows:
 - Anyone infected by COVID-19 that had a positive test result or one confirmed by an epidemiological link and is not deemed to have recovered
 - Anyone who is suspected of being infected with COVID-19 due to compatible symptoms
 - Anyone who is symptomatic and waiting for a COVID-19 test result
 - Anyone who has been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days
 - Anyone who has returned from a trip outside within the last 14 days
 - Anyone who has been instructed by public health authorities to self-isolate.

Anyone who fits any of the above criteria will be denied access.

Informal caregivers that do not obey the instructions despite having been fully informed and monitored for the use of hygienic measures could be denied access to a CHSLD or an RI for seniors with at least 20 places.

Relations between care recipients and their friends and family members should continue and even intensify during the holiday season, both virtually and by telephone.

Instructions for the general public during the holiday season amid the COVID-19 pandemic are available at the following web page: [COVID-19-related instructions for the holiday season](#).

Informal caregivers who enter a CHSLD or RI for seniors with at least 20 places from December 17 to January 11 inclusively must remain particularly vigilant and follow all instructions issued for the general population. This means avoiding all gatherings in orange zones.

Informal caregivers and visitors will be permitted entry to all [palliative and end-of-life facilities](#). Please refer to the current directives on the MSSS website at: https://msss.gouv.qc.ca/professionnels/documents/coronavirus-2019-ncov/COVID-19-Directives_SPFV_2020-10-05.pdf.

2. Specific measures in CHSLD or RI facilities for seniors with at least 20 places where no outbreak has occurred, at all alert levels

Informal caregivers:

- Appointments may be required by a facility to ease the reception and monitoring process and abide by hygienic measures at all times, based on current directives
- In orange alert zones, informal caregivers from a different administrative region might not be permitted access to facilities
- In red alert zones, only travel by informal caregivers between neighbouring areas at the same alert level will be accepted for entry

3. Specific measures in CHSLD or RI facilities for seniors with at least 20 places where there exists an outbreak or a quarantined resident

- Informal caregivers can continue to access the facility, subject to specific conditions that are issued.

4. Informal caregivers must comply with the following instructions

4.1. Isolation, symptoms monitoring and screening:

- You are required to self-monitor for symptoms. If even the lowest level of symptoms is observed, do not enter a CHSLD or RI for seniors with at least 20 places (See the list of symptoms in the appendix).
- If you are in isolation or meet any the exclusion criteria shown above, you cannot enter a CHSLD or RI for seniors with at least 20 places.
- If you screened positive for COVID-19, you can only enter a CHSLD or RI for seniors with at least 20 places once you are deemed to have recovered based on recognized and confirmed public health criteria.
- Informal caregivers may request a screening test. However, CHSLD or RI for seniors with at least 20 places cannot require an informal caregiver to receive a negative screening test result in order to access the facility.

4.2. Infection prevention and control measures:

- You must sign the visitors' register to enable public health authorities to contact you in case of an outbreak and to self-isolate if this is needed.
- Take note of all available information on symptoms monitoring, hand-washing, breathing etiquette and the use of personal protective equipment ([PPI](#)).
- Wash your hands when entering and leaving a CHSLD or RI for seniors with at least 20 places and when entering and leaving a patient's room and the hot zone, if any.
- Correctly wear a procedure mask inside a CHSLD or RI for seniors with at least 20 places during the entire visit. The procedure mask can only be used once.
- Use personal protective equipment appropriately and in compliance with instructions.
- Maintain a physical distance of two metres at all times within a CHSLD or RI for seniors with at least 20 places, especially if two residents share a room but also throughout the facility.
- Arrive in clean clothes. Change your clothes upon returning home and wash them regularly.

4.3. Moving around inside a CHSLD or RI for seniors with at least 20 places:

- At all times, comply with the two-metre distancing rule between yourself and all residents, staff and other caregivers.
- Do not enter equipment storerooms.
- Leave the room whenever medical procedures that generate aerosols take place, and follow staff instructions for going back inside the room.
- Ask which bathrooms have been assigned to caregivers and what mandatory precautions and sanitary instructions are in effect. As an example, using hot zone bathrooms is not recommended.

The following Québec.ca web page is meant for informal caregivers: [Informal and family caregivers and visitors to facilities during the coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#).

It provides a lot of information, short videos and references to support you in your role, help you to better understand and remember the important hygienic measures that you must comply with during visits and answer some of your queries.

Are you dissatisfied or disagree with the interpretation and implementation of ministerial directives?

- A manager or other designated individual at a CHSLD or RI for seniors with at least 20 places is in charge of answering questions and dealing with caregiver dissatisfaction with the interpretation or implementation of ministerial directives. We encourage you to learn the identity of that person.
- If your dissatisfaction or disagreement persists, you have the right to confidentially contact the Service Quality and Complaints Commissioner per the facility's complaints review procedure.

USEFUL REFERENCES

Informal caregivers

- [Informal and family caregivers and visitors to facilities during the coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)
- [Answers to questions about Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Caregiver Support](#): 1-855 852-7784 or info-aidant@lappui.org

APPENDIX 1: Symptoms self-monitoring grid

COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

Asymptomatic

Date of onset of symptoms _____ YYYY-MM-DD

Symptoms associated with a COVID-19 episode			
Recent onset or worsening of chronic cough	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Fever ($\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ or 100.4°F ; seniors: $\geq 37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ or 100°F)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Sudden loss of smell (anosmia) without nasal congestion, with or without loss of taste (ageusia)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Difficulty breathing, out-of-breath or difficulty speaking	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Intense fatigue and major loss of appetite	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Feverishness/shivering (temperature not taken)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Sore throat	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Headache	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Generalized weakness	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Muscular, chest, stomach and other pain	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Irritability/confusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Diarrhea	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Other (Please state) _____			

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