



North Okanagan Hospice Society's Response to COVID-19

Issued: March 16, 2020

North Okanagan Hospice Society is continuing to monitor the development of the COVID-19 pandemic. To ensure the health and safety of our residents, families, staff and volunteers, we are committed to keeping you informed and are closely monitoring notices from Interior Health Authority, the BC Ministry of Health, the BC Centre for Disease Control and the Public Health Agency of Canada.

This is a quickly evolving situation and we will do our utmost to keep you informed here on our website. Please check back for up-to-date information.

Ensuring the health and safety of our residents, families, staff and volunteers is paramount.

We are taking the following precautions:

- Additional measures are now in place to ensure high standards of hygiene including sanitizing high traffic areas and high touch points such as handrails, door handles and knobs at an increased frequency.
- We have limited the direct care of our residents to staff only. All volunteers are not on-site at this time.

Visitors to Hospice House (Vernon)

Due to the vulnerability of our palliative residents, we are putting the following measures into place:

- Visitors to Hospice House can expect screening questions upon arrival. We are asking families to limit visitors to immediate family members only, and one at a time if possible.
- If two visitors arrive at the same time, one is asked to stay in their vehicle until it is their turn to visit. Do not come to Hospice House if you are sick.

- If visitors have respiratory symptoms: cough, fever, fatigue, shortness of breath, report your illness to 811 and stay at home for 14 days. Do not return unless your fever has gone away.
- Residents and families that are visiting are asked to stay in resident rooms.
- If they can, families can provide a cell phone to allow for loved ones to talk to the resident on a phone rather than visiting in-house.
- Access to the living room and dining room and public washrooms are limited to staff only. Immediate family visiting are asked to use the washroom in their resident's room.
- Families are asked to bring their own water, coffee and other refreshments and snacks until further notice.
- Upon entering the facility, a resident room and leaving the facility, please practice safe hand and respiratory hygiene, as per the BC Centre for Disease Control.

The most important thing you can do to prevent coronavirus and other illnesses is to wash your hands regularly and avoid touching your face.

Cover your mouth when you cough so you're not exposing other people. If you are sick yourself, stay away from others. Contact your healthcare provider ahead of time so you can be safely assessed.

Cancellation/postponement of events:

- Volunteer Information Sessions scheduled for March 19, 27 and April 1 have been cancelled at this time.
- Our in-house webinar scheduled for March 25 in our boardroom has been cancelled.
- The In-House Memorial Service scheduled for March 26 has been cancelled.
- We will not be offering the spring session of 'Finding My Way Grief Support Group' that was to start on April 8, 2020 at Hospice House.
- In-person counselling sessions are cancelled. If possible, they will be conducted by telephone.
- There will be no tours of Hospice House until further notice.

It is our top priority to keep those in our care safe by limiting access to only essential visitors. Thank you for your patience and understanding during this time.