

## MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, July 22, 2020

### **Niagara Health's Extended Care Unit welcoming indoor visitors and two visitors at a time**

Niagara Health continues to lift visitor restrictions and is now arranging indoor visits with residents and their loved ones at its Extended Care Unit (ECU) in Welland beginning Wednesday, July 22. In addition, two visitors at a time are now welcome for both indoor and outdoor visits.

Outdoor visitors are no longer required to show proof of a negative COVID-19 test; however, indoor visitors are required to provide proof of a negative test within the previous two weeks of every visit. These new guidelines are consistent with direction from the Ontario Ministry of Long-Term Care, ensuring all steps necessary are taken to help maintain a safe environment for residents, visitors and team members.

"Families have been really understanding and appreciate the fact that we're doing everything we can to keep their loved ones safe," says Lezlie Leduc, Programs and Services Manager at the Extended Care Unit. "Residents are so happy to see their family again, but the hardest part for everyone is that they can't hug and hold hands," she says. "Our outdoor visiting booth has been great because they're able to put their hands up to each other on the plexiglass."

Outdoor visits are taking place in a custom-designed visiting booth at the ECU's front entrance while indoor visits will take place in the ECU main lobby. Since June 18, the ECU has welcomed more than 200 visitors back to its home.

#### **All ECU visitors must:**

- Pass a screening questionnaire administered by ECU staff including temperature checks.
- Wear a mask throughout the visit. Those visiting outside are asked to bring their own mask.
- Maintain a physical distancing of two metres throughout the visit.
- Not bring pets or any outside food or drink for residents.
- Arrive five minutes before their scheduled visit and wait in their vehicles until a staff member invites them to the designated area.

Currently, two people may visit a resident at a time and visits are scheduled in 45-minute increments seven days a week. All visits must be arranged ahead of time by emailing or calling the Extended Care Unit team by contacting Lezlie Leduc by email at [Lezlie.Leduc@niagarahealth.on.ca](mailto:Lezlie.Leduc@niagarahealth.on.ca) or by phone at (905) 378-4647 ext. 34585.

Information on how to get tested at a Niagara Health COVID-19 Assessment Centre is available [here](#). Learn more about the Extended Care Unit [here](#).

#### **Media Contact:**

Lisa Pepperall, Communications Specialist  
(905) 378-4647 ext. 47576  
[lisa.pepperall@niagarahealth.on.ca](mailto:lisa.pepperall@niagarahealth.on.ca)