

COVID-19 REPORT

Although it could be worse without the “steel wall” around long term care, the next couple of weeks may see the full impact of COVID-19 in our homes. The guiding principles for OLTC are:

1. Keep our residents safe by taking all measures to prevent entry of COVID-19 into the home, if necessary, reduce risk of transmission in the home.
2. Support families, staff and management with both professional care and personal support.
3. Prevent surge of ill patients to acute care, which includes transfers to the emergency department.
4. Educate residents and families about the care ill residents will receive in the home.
5. Along with social distancing, use remote and virtual care to ensure safety of residents and staff.
6. Use telemedicine and other means of virtual care for consultations and care management.
7. Encourage physicians and NPs must take care of themselves in order prevent illness, transmission and burn-out.
8. Provide our colleagues with current and relevant information that is evidence-based and experiential.

Physicians need to be available, either by virtual visit or at the bedside with full PPE, to attend residents with COVID-19. The risk of death is greatest for older adults, especially those with frailty and co-morbidities. The best care is most likely in home. Moreover, “patient autonomy and life-prolonging measures or location of death as a result of public health directives and resource availability”. Shared decision-making between clinicians, residents, SDMs and families is a core process for planning end-of-life. Three domains of palliative care are:

- i. Management of patient symptoms,
- ii. Discussion of wishes, expectations and values through advance care planning and articulation of goals of care, and
- iii. Supporting families through life-limiting illness

<https://www.cmaj.ca/content/early/2020/03/31/cmaj.200465>

OLTC participates with Hospice Palliative Care Ontario (HPCO), a provincial association of hospices and palliative care providers, professionals, and volunteers throughout Ontario. Speak Up Ontario is an initiative of HPCO to improve awareness of Advance Care Planning. Speak Up Ontario provides valuable resources for clinicians in conversation and care of COVID-19.

<https://www.speakupontario.ca/resources-for-health-care-providers/>

[Guide for Clinicians COVID-19 Goals of Care Discussion](https://www.speakupontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Guide-for-Clinicians-Covid-19-GoC-Discussions.pdf)

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You will not harm a person by talking about their illness and the future. People want and need the truth about what to expect as this enables making informed decisions. This guide is meant to assist you with discussing the near future with seriously ill, frail or elderly people & substitute decision-makers (SDMs) in community, long-term care, complex continuing care or hospital settings.

[Conversation Guide for Patients in Long Term Care or Other Institutions Who Have Mild/Moderate COVID-19](https://www.speakupontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Conversation-Guide-For-Patients-in-LTC-or-other-institutions-who-have-moderate-COVID19.pdf)

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This guide is meant to assist you with discussing the current situation with resident's health regarding COVID-19 and prepare them for possible limits in health care system.

[Management of Respiratory Distress and End-of-Life Care in COVID-19 Residents in Long Term Care Homes:](https://www.speakupontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Management-of-Respiratory-Distress-EOL-Care-in-Covid-19-Residents-in-LTC.pdf)

<https://www.speakupontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Management-of-Respiratory-Distress-EOL-Care-in-Covid-19-Residents-in-LTC.pdf>

This order set is to be used when residents' goals of care include prioritizing comfort and the treatment decisions are consistent with DNR, no hospital transfer, symptom and supportive care in place.

[Goodbye Phone Conversation Script from VitalTalk:](https://www.speakupontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Goodbye-Phone-Conversation-Script-from-VitalTalk.pdf)

<https://www.speakupontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Goodbye-Phone-Conversation-Script-from-VitalTalk.pdf>

Conversation map with specific phrases to use when helping family members share last words over the phone.

Speak Up Ontario also provides valuable resources for residents and families.

<https://www.speakupontario.ca/resources-for-individuals-and-families/>.

The OMA Section on Palliative Medicine is hosting a '[Palliative Care and COVID-19 Pandemic Planning Session](https://oma.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8bTUgc9DQLSPSuBjv3CjTg)' on Tuesday, April 7th at 7 pm. All OMA are members welcome to attend. Register in advance.

https://oma.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8bTUgc9DQLSPSuBjv3CjTg