



December 26, 2020

For Immediate Release:

Update on the Response to the COVID-19 Outbreak at Tendercare Living Centre

(Toronto, Ontario) An expert team from North York General Health (NYGH) in partnership with Tendercare Living Centre staff, Toronto Public Health and other health professionals are working intensively to control this serious COVID-19 outbreak and restore a safe environment within the home.

“North York General is committed to supporting Tendercare to successfully resolve the outbreak and reduce the impact of this terrible virus on the residents and staff at the home,” says Karyn Popovich, Interim President and CEO at North York General. “Our expert team of physicians, nurses and other professionals are already enhancing patient care and providing infection control oversight, support and education.”

Important activities are underway and clear progress is being made:

Staffing support

A senior manager from NYGH is dedicated to overseeing the outbreak response and stabilization of the long-term care home. Additional physicians have been brought in to supplement the physicians already on site and are providing medical and clinical care and supporting communications with families.

There is an intensive effort underway to recruit additional nursing, PSW and other needed staff.

Environmental services and cleaning

An additional team of housekeepers and environmental cleaning staff has been brought in to deep clean the entire facility, starting with the highest risk areas such as common spaces. The team of environmental service experts are also training and educating staff.

Education and training

Education and training for staff and physicians working at the long-term care home is well underway. They are receiving intensive training and education in infection prevention and control best practices and protocols including proper donning and doffing of PPE and continuous cleaning of spaces and equipment. Staff and physicians recruited to work at the home receive all required training upon hiring.

Infection prevention and control

In addition to training and ensuring adherence to best practices, every effort is being made to separate residents who have tested positive for COVID-19 from those who do not have the virus, in accordance with public health protocols.

There is sufficient personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies at the facility and we are continuously monitoring supplies to ensure there is appropriate PPE at all times to meet IPAC standards.

Communications with families

It is a priority to ensure families are informed about their family member in the home and that there are effective processes to respond to families' questions. Newsletters to families and weekly townhalls are the main ways all designated family members are kept informed. The home's leadership is working to contact each family and additional resources are being brought on to ensure all families have direct and timely contact to discuss their loved one's situation and personal needs.

"A COVID-19 outbreak is extremely difficult to mitigate when case rates in the surrounding community are high. Tendercare has been hard-hit by the virus and as a result, a significant number of staff are infected and have been forced to isolate. We have reached out to the surrounding hospitals, Ontario Health and staffing agencies for additional resources to support resident care," says Francis Martis, Executive Director, Tendercare Living Centre. "North York General Hospital responded to our call and I am very grateful for their support. Our teams will be collaborating with the physicians, clinicians and infection control experts provided by North York General Hospital to clear the virus from our home as quickly as possible, while reducing the current pressures on our staff as they work to care for our residents. Our responsibility to our residents and the people who love them is paramount."

COVID-19 cases in the home on December 26

Today, there are 116 residents with COVID-19 at the home and 77 COVID-19 positive staff are currently in isolation at home. Today, three residents have passed away from COVID-19 and the total number of individuals who have died from COVID-19 during the outbreak is 39. Our deepest condolences go to those who have lost family members to this disease.

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