



December 27, 2020

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

(Toronto, Ontario)

Progress continues to be made to control the serious outbreak at Tendercare Living Centre long-term care home and restore a safe environment for residents and those working at the home.

With the entire Ontario health care system under major strain as cases of COVID climb, and the very high demand for health professionals across the system, finding additional staff is very difficult for all organizations at this time. There continues to be challenges to boost staffing levels above baseline to manage the outbreak effectively.

Staffing support

Under the temporary voluntary management agreement with North York General, the Executive Lead overseeing the outbreak response and management at Tendercare is Susan Kwolek, RN, a senior nursing executive with extensive experience leading responses to infectious disease outbreaks including the COVID-19 outbreak at Hawthorne Place Care Centre and the SARS outbreak in 2003. Dr. Kevin Katz, Medical Director of Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) at North York General Hospital and Medical Director of the Shared Hospital Laboratory, is leading infection prevention and control at the long-term care home.

Physician staffing levels at Tendercare are strong and we are grateful for the physicians across Toronto and beyond who have stepped up to support the staff at the home and care for residents. Primary care physicians and specialists from North York General Hospital and the community are on site every day in addition to the physicians already affiliated with the long-term care home. The physician team on site is providing medical and personal care to residents and working hard to connect with family members to discuss their loved ones' situation.

There is an immediate need for more nurses at the home. The goal is to maintain the full nursing complement required to meet the long-term care standards in Ontario and also secure additional nursing resources to support outbreak management and training. NYGH, Tendercare, the Central East LHIN and other partners are employing multiple strategies to recruit nurses including through nursing agencies, working with the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario and tapping the LHIN nursing teams.

Currently, PSWs are available in sufficient numbers in the home and play a key role in meeting personal care needs, monitoring and providing social interaction with the residents.

An environmental services organization specializing in industrial cleaning, KleanCare Services, has been deployed to lead enhanced cleaning of the entire facility.

There are a range of other professionals supporting the long-term care home on site and behind the scenes including IPAC professionals, Occupational Health and Safety and Communications. More personnel will assist as needed as the outbreak response progresses.

In addition to the direct contact between the physicians and staff and family members, NYGH is providing additional dedicated resources to call families individually and respond to questions.

COVID-19 cases in the home on December 27

Currently there are 128 residents with COVID-19 at the home and 69 COVID-19 positive staff are currently in isolation at home. Eight (8) staff who had COVID-19 now have resolved cases and are able to return to work. Resolved cases means that it has been 10 days since the lab test confirming COVID-19 and the individual is no longer showing COVID-19 symptoms.

Today, two residents have passed away from COVID-19 and the total number of individuals who have died from COVID-19 during the outbreak is 41. Our deepest condolences go to those who have lost family members to this disease.

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