

November 20, 2020

AR 180392

## **RE: Rising COVID-19 Case Numbers**

To all licenced supportive living, long-term care and hospice residents and families:

I want to extend my deep appreciation for the efforts you are taking daily to protect yourselves and others in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. I know the last few months have been, and continue to be, truly difficult and tiring. But it is critical, more than ever, that we stay the course.

I am very concerned about the rising COVID-19 case numbers in Alberta and I am asking for your help in protecting those most vulnerable to the COVID-19 pandemic. The staff of the buildings where you or your family member live are doing everything they can to keep the risk of infection low while keeping as much normalcy as possible. But we very much need your help. It is imperative that you remain vigilant in your actions to protect yourself and others around you.

If residents can avoid going out when there is not a critical need (which will also vary resident to resident), I am asking you to do that at this time. I've asked other community members to do the same thing, especially in communities where the risk is higher. If you can voluntarily limit your activities, you will together help reduce the risk both for yourself and those who live around you.

It is important to continue to practice good hand hygiene and physical distancing, and observe site rules for indoor and outdoor activities. Resident health remains a top priority and it is necessary for the current

restrictions to remain in place. At this time, I am still unable to say for how long.

I recognize that this continues to be a challenging time. Please understand that, until a safe and effective vaccine is available, the restrictions in place are the best known measures to help minimize the risk of COVID-19 to you, your neighbours, your loved ones, and the staff.

If you are a resident and the ongoing restrictions are causing you distress, please reach out to your site contact. Staff and operators are committed to your wellbeing and are best equipped to offer immediate support. They can also explore options that may be available to you.

If you are a family member, I know you have had to change how you interact and connect with your loved one(s). I know this is very difficult, but I ask you to please continue to make those connections, if not in person, then through the phone and other technologies as you are able. If in person and you are from high risk areas (e.g. Calgary, Edmonton), please evaluate your need to be physically present (based on resident need and your ability to find another way to connect, whenever you can), to help in limiting the amount of people entering the site. When you are on-site, please follow all policies and processes (e.g. site safe visiting policy) and when off-site, please adhere to public health guidance (monitor [www.alberta.ca/covid](http://www.alberta.ca/covid) for up to date information) and minimize your own risks.

Thank you for continuing to prioritize public health advice to protect your safety, and the safety of those around you. We are in this together.

Yours sincerely,



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Chief Medical Officer of Health

cc: John Cabral, Assistant Deputy Minister, Health Service Delivery,  
Alberta Health

Trish Merrithew-Mercredi, Assistant Deputy Minister, Public Health  
and Compliance, Alberta Health