
November 23, 2020

To: Families and Friends of Luther Court Society
From: Karen Johnson-Lefsrud, Executive Director

Re: Update regarding new Provincial Health Orders and Masking at Luther Court

Dear Family and Friends,

This update seeks to keep you up-to-date on the status of life at Luther Court and provide you with pertinent and current information as it pertains to the care and well-being of your loved ones.

As you will be aware from news reports, Dr. Henry and her team have drawn the circle a little closer this past week, in terms of our bubbles and in terms of strategies to try to reduce and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 that is being evidenced across the province. What is concerning to us particularly, is the marked increase of spread of the virus on Vancouver Island, and the first incidents of outbreaks in facilities – one at the Nanaimo Regional General Hospital, and two at long term care facilities – (one in Port Alberni and one in Campbell River.) The outbreak at NRGH has now been declared over, and I believe it is good news that beyond the initial 5 staff that were identified as being positive for COVID, the virus was not spread to any patients, and further spread to other staff was also contained. The outbreak never moved beyond the 5 original staff. This indicates that the precautions around masking, hand hygiene and physical distancing are working.

The first thing I want to underscore is that the new provincial orders do not change the current protocols for social visits with the single designated visitor or the essential visits for end-of-life visits or other challenges that meet the essential visit criteria. These protocols remain intact, and we ask you to continue to book your designated social visits through Amber (ahayes@luthercourt.org). For those in care the visits will be in designated visit stations on the main floor. For those in our apartments, the visits will be in the apartments. In both cases, all designated visitors must pre-book their visits, must enter and exit through the main entrance, and must undergo the screening procedures. What has changed, is that the new orders set by the province require us not to gather outside our own households, or if you live alone, your “household bubble.” If you live by yourself, your household bubble may include one/two others, whom you consistently see, not one/two different people each visit or each day. Because most of our tenants live alone or with a spouse, they fall in this “household bubble” category. We recommend for this time, that the designated visitor be the other person in their household bubble. Although we cannot restrict you from leaving Luther Court, we are discouraging you from doing so, in keeping with the provincial mandate to bend the curve.

A couple of words about visits at Luther Court. We know that this is an exceedingly difficult time for families. It is also a difficult time for our residents, tenants and for our staff. All of us are weary of the protocols. We all long to “return to normal.” However, we are well aware, that this virus is not under check yet, and we are in this together for the foreseeable future. In that light, I want to thank you for practicing kindness and respect for our staff, and we pledge to practice kindness and respect to you as well. When you are asked a question or reminded of a safety protocol, please receive it in the spirit in

which it is offered – which is to keep this vulnerable population safe, while also making as much room as possible for connection with loved ones. Your masks must be worn while on-site at Luther Court – throughout the visit, and this includes in the tenant’s apartment. You are asked not to linger in the building beyond the specified visiting site, and to leave promptly through the main door when the visit is concluded.

As it pertains to communication, we understand that there is a lot of detail about the care of your loved one that you were able to obtain when you physically visited on the care houses. We are making a concerted effort to bridge the communication gaps you may be feeling as we move forward. For those with loved ones in care, each resident is assigned a Most Responsible Nurse (MRN). Please feel free to email your MRN with particular questions relating to the care of your loved one. They can be reached by emailing:

Caroline	cshires@luthercourt.org
Laurie	llawrance@luthercourt.org – (job share with Carolyn)
Carolyn	cgoluz@luthercourt.org - (job share with Laurie)
Alpha	avicente@luthercourt.org
Nolan	ncameron@luthercourt.org

If you don’t know who your MRN is, please email Lori McKenzie (lmckenzie@luthercourt.org) and she will direct you to the appropriate MRN. The MRNs will make every effort to be responsive to your emails.

In addition, if your loved one is in Assisted/Independent Living, and you have a question, please reach out to our Home Support Nurse, Lisa Haagenson by emailing lhaagenson@luthercourt.org

The other important change that is occurring in these new orders, is that tenants will now be required to mask when they are outside of their own suites, except when they are in the dining room for a meal, at which time we will be ensuring adequate physical distancing is in place. Tenants will be provided with a fresh mask each day by the Greeter or the Activity Worker. The next day they can wear their mask downstairs and swap it out for a fresh one from the greeter (or Activity Worker). This will be an adjustment for our tenants – and we all know that the wearing of masks is not comfortable – but it has been proven to be an effective deterrent to the spread of COVID-19.

As we live in this season of shortened days, and inclement weather, and the overhanging heaviness of the potential spread of the virus, I encourage you to take good care of yourselves, including your mental health. These are challenging times. But I do believe we will get through these times together. Thank you again for your caring, your concern and your commitment to keeping the community at Luther Court safe. We share in that commitment with you. It takes sacrifice and hard work and perseverance. This may be the hardest part of the journey. We couldn’t ask for a better group of companions to make the journey with us.

We are so very grateful for your prayers. You are in our prayers.

Best regards,
Karen Johnson-Lefsrud
Executive Director