



1525 Cedar Hill Cross Road
Victoria BC
V8P 5M1
250.477.7241

September 9, 2021

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

Dear Family and Friends,

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

I hope that you have enjoyed these balmy late summer days. Those of us who live in Victoria can be grateful that the smoke of the wildfires did not present a great challenge in this area. We continue to hold those communities across the province who had significant air quality issues or who had to evacuate their homes in our thoughts and prayers.

Vaccine Passports

Since I last communicated with you, the province has proceeded with instituting a vaccine passport. After September 13, 2021, a vaccine passport will be required for all persons age 12 and above to enter a restaurant, organized indoor events (e.g. a wedding, parties, conferences etc), gyms and fitness centres, movie theatres and many other venues. If residents and tenants of Luther Court will want to attend such places, they will need a vaccine passport. We ask that families assist their family member, where needed, in obtaining their vaccine passport or card. Our staff will not have time to assist all our residents/tenants to obtain this. I just downloaded mine today, and it is very easy to do. The link to go to is: www.gov.bc.ca/vaccinecard.html and you will find step-by-step instructions for how to access your card, or that of your loved one. You will require their Personal Health Number (PHN), their birthdate as well as the date of one of the vaccine doses given. If your loved one received their vaccine dose(s) at Luther Court the following dates may help you:

Resident & Assisted Living Vaccine Clinic Dates: 1.) Jan 22, 2021 2.) May 13, 2021
Independent Living Vaccine Clinic Dates: 1.) Mar 3, 2021 2.) June 3, 2021

At the Resident/Assisted Living clinics there were a few independent living tenants that were given extra doses – for examples all of the spouses in independent living who had had their partner living in care were vaccinated with those extra doses on the Resident & AL Clinic days. So, if you or your loved one falls into that category, you would need to state the first set of dates listed above. However most tenants in independent living will have had their vaccines on the second set of dates above.

For those who do not use a computer or cellular phone you can call [1-833-838-2323](tel:1-833-838-2323) to order a paper copy, or receive further instruction.

Thank you in advance for helping to register your family member.

Increase in COVID-19 cases in our Community

You will be as aware as I am that cases of COVID-19 have risen sharply in the province and in Victoria as part of this fourth wave, we are in the midst of. Most worrying to us is that another care home in Victoria is in the midst of an outbreak that has sadly taken the lives of four residents. Our thoughts and prayers surround those who live and work in that community and especially those who have been ill or lost loved ones. What that outbreak informs us is the vital need for continued well-established infection control protocols here at Luther Court. A mandatory mask mandate is in place for all places in Luther Court. You will be screened at the front entrance and provided with a mask. We ask you please not to visit if you are feeling at all unwell. Our good techniques of frequent and thorough hand washing will be needed; a good cough etiquette and maintaining a distance of 2 metres from others are those tried and true protocols that have helped to keep us safe thus far and that we must continue to practice in earnest. In addition, please, if you have not already been vaccinated, consider going to get your shots, not only for your own protection, but for the protection of others including the most vulnerable among us – our seniors.

Vaccine Mandates for Staff in Long-Term Care and Assisted Living

The Province has mandated that all staff working in Long-Term Care and Assisted Living must be fully vaccinated by October 13th or they will be prohibited from working in these settings. While the vast majority of our staff are vaccinated, we do have a few staff who for a variety of reasons are not willing to take a vaccine. We will undoubtedly lose some of them, and we are indeed sorry for this, as we will miss them as part of our team. We do however, support the provincial direction that Dr. Henry and her team have taken, as we believe vaccines provide the greatest possible protection for all, especially our residents and tenants. It has been an especially difficult chapter for us who work in this sector, and we appreciate your support and prayers as we make our way through this time.

Staffing Challenges

We are drawing to the close of summer, and many staff have been able to take their well-deserved vacations. However, at the same time, we have had a challenging time for staffing. Vacation absences have been compounded by other absences including staff who have been injured, experienced personal tragedy, or who are moving to another community. We, together with healthcare organizations across the province and across the country are experiencing severe shortages in available staff. For the most part we have been able to have a full complement of staff, with the use of staff on overtime. However, there were some shifts, particularly in one two-week window, where our staff had to work short on a number of occasions. We salute our staff who are caring, resilient and hard-working and did their utmost to ensure that our residents were well-cared for, even in those times. I want you to know that these shortages were not due to us trying to save money. It was simply that there were occasions that we had no one available to work, even on overtime. We continue to participate in provincial programs to train additional staff, including a current program for health care assistants where we are a training facility and their education is divided between time spent with us and time in educational institutions. We currently have four such students, and have been approved to receive four more students. At the end of their education they agree to work for us for a minimum of one year. With the summer behind us, we are confident that this staffing situation should ease. If you know of any persons who are interested in a career in health care, now is the time to encourage them. It is a field that will require many new recruits as we move forward. Healthy communities require a robust healthcare work force.

The Federal Election

A mobile polling station will be set up at Luther Court for those who reside at Luther Court on Monday, September 13, 2021 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. This gives our residents and tenants an option to vote in

an accessible way. If you have any questions about how this will work, please contact Carolyn Hoekstra at choekstra@luthercourt.org

Renovations at Luther Court

Phase 1 renovations at Luther Court are almost complete. Many of our spaces have been renovated and we are ready to move offices from the area that will become the Community Health Centre (CHC) into refurbished and re-designed spaces in our building. The work on the CHC space will begin in earnest in the next 2 – 4 weeks. It will be less disruptive to our community as the contractors will be working in an area that is not in the centre of everything! In addition, a major overhaul of our central elevators is now in progress. The small elevator is almost completed, and within a couple of weeks, the large elevator will be down for a complete overhaul. These inconveniences are necessary to upgrade our aging elevators – now over 40 years old. We are looking forward to the completion of this important task. As our gift shop has been taken over in these renovations we are establishing a gift cart to meet the needs that the Gazebo Gifts previously filled. This cart will be present on the Main Floor one day a week and taken up to the care units one day a week. More information will follow, as we know more of the details.

Visiting Hours:

Because you must be screened for every visit, visiting hours are limited to when the screener is available to do that screening. **Visiting hours are therefore from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

Pastor Ed continues his work in his quiet and supportive way, and is open to your phone calls and emails if he can be of support to our families. He can be reached by emailing echell@luthercourt.org or by calling 250 477-7241 ext. 23.

As ever, we appreciate the family and friends that support Luther Court in such a variety of helpful ways. We know that we are in this together. Thank you for being there! We are grateful for your prayers. You are in our prayers.