



Department of Health & Wellness

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To: Operators of Licensed Community Care Facilities and Nursing Homes

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From: Dr. Heather Morrison Chief Public Health Officer

Date: April 24, 2023

Subject: Updated COVID-19 Guidance for Long Term Care and Community Care

On Friday March 31, 2023, the Public Health Order on COVID-19 Prevention that required universal masking in acute and LTC/CC facilities across PEI was replaced by COVID-19 guidance for LTC/CCF staff masking during patient care and for visitors when entering and moving through these facilities.

On April 24, 2023, the Provincial COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for LTC/CC facilities has been updated. **Effective immediately, universal masking is no longer required in private LTC/CC facilities.** Staff are expected to perform point-of-care risk assessments to determine when masks should be worn in patient care areas. In addition, anyone who is symptomatic (staff or visitors) should stay home when ill and wear a mask around vulnerable people until symptoms resolve. Anyone who chooses to wear a mask while working or visiting LTC/CC facilities should be supported in their choice to do so.

If required, legal orders for masking will be reinstated by the Chief Public Health Officer for individual facilities (or more broadly) in instances where there is an emerging or ongoing threat to the health of the residents that is mitigated by reinstating universal masking or other measures for staff and visitors in keeping with the current epidemiology of COVID-19, IPAC principles, and in line with changes regarding masking occurring in jurisdictions across the country.

We all have been adjusting to loosening of measures in this pandemic and we will continue to work together on this process. Public health officials, administrators and staff of all facilities are trying their best to provide the safest care for the residents and patients.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to the Chief Public Health Office at (902) 368-4996 if you have questions.