

## Cassellholme Family Council Meeting

Held by *Zoom*, North Bay, ON

June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020

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<b>Welcome (2:00)</b>	This was the first Family Council meeting to be held using <i>Zoom</i> . Blanche-Hélène Tremblay welcomed everyone, followed by a brief check-in. Those present all find themselves in very different situations with their relatives. Condolences were offered to Émilie Johnson whose mother passed away recently.
<b>Attendance (4)</b>	Karen Gooch (Recorder), Émilie Johnson, Ann McIntyre, Blanche-Hélène Tremblay (Chair)
<b>Regrets</b>	Jillian Duchesne (Staff Representative)
<b>Agenda</b>	The agenda was approved by consensus.
<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b>	Deferred
<b>Covid-19</b>	
Cassellholme Perspective	<p>A discussion was held about our general impressions of how things are going at Cassellholme during the Covid-19 lockdown:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ They seem to have been quite successful at keeping Covid-19 out of the facility. They have an area of the building available to isolate any residents that might become sick.</li> <li>▪ The staff has been wonderful - they can't do enough. The activity staff has been very good at dealing with video calls and arranging for window visits.</li> <li>▪ Cassellholme is looking at possibly of defining essential visitors.</li> <li>▪ The communication has been generally good. The website Covid-19 section is good, but is not entirely up-to-date. They have set up a dedicated phone extension for family members to get updates on the residents. The webinar with reps from the hospital and long term care facilities was very informative. The link is available on the website. News releases are now going out to Family Council before they are given to the media. The Cassellholme <i>Facebook</i> page has been reactivated and the reaction has been positive. There were questions about the privacy of residents whose pictures are posted and monitoring of the comment section.</li> <li>▪ Cassellholme has done well compared to many other LTC facilities. It may have been a bit of luck, since we live in a relatively isolated area.</li> </ul> <p>Family Council is facing a few challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Communication with members is harder since we don't have access to the bulletin board and we were not able to access the Cassellholme email list to publicize this meeting because they are in the midst of revamping it.</li> <li>▪ We have also lost a few members due to residents passing away. We should be encouraging continued involvement once a loved one passes away.</li> </ul>
Friends and Family Perspective	<p>Several people spoke about some of the challenges they are having during the lockdown:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is very hard for caregivers of residents who are totally dependent. Some</li> </ul>

caregivers should be allowed into the facility as essential workers to provide much needed unpaid help to ease pressure on the staff. There was concern that in some facilities volunteers or the military were called in before family caregivers. One member who has brought her mother home for the duration stated that they spend 5 hours a day on personal care and extra time for walks and entertainment. A check-in from Cassellholme staff was very much appreciated.

- There was concern about the letter indicating that residents who became ill would not be sent to hospital. Is this a denial of the right to health care?
- There was also concern regarding an insensitive remark by one of the staff who phoned about permission for Covid-19 testing.
- It was acknowledged by those with a longer history at Cassellholme that the relationship between the staff and families and caregivers has improved over the years.

### **LTC in Ontario**

Daily emails have been circulated to Family Council members from *Family Councils Ontario* (FCO) with information about Covid-19 and long term care. Émilie Johnson and Ann McIntyre have been actively involved with the *North East Family Councils Network* (NEFCN) and the *Ontario Health Coalition* (OHC). There has been a lot of advocacy from these groups, but our members are encouraged to write individual letters outlining their concerns.

- Samantha Peck from FCO has been very good at responding to any communications.
- There has been a push to get family caregivers into facilities (with precautions in place) for the health of residents. There is evidence of things such as weight lost and dehydration in some residents.
- There is also advocacy to help staff members cope, including pushing to make sure there is adequate personal protection equipment (PPE) and ensuring that workers who are positive and asymptomatic are no longer allowed to work.

<https://fco.ngo/>

<https://www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca/>

### **Months to Come**

Some time was spend looking forward:

- Plans were discussed about parades to honour the Cassellholme workers. These have been very successful and the next one is planned for June 30<sup>th</sup>. Some wondered about holding one on a weekend so that those who are working can participate. There may be an issue since there is fewer staff on duty, but this will be looked into.
- Members are encouraged to write one of the above mentioned organizations or your MPP's office with any concerns you may have with long term care facilities.
- Family Council will send a letter to Cassellholme so say thank you and provide positive feedback. Specific ongoing concerns will be shared at a later date.
- We will continue to monitor reopening plans and hopefully things will be done with safety as a top priority.
- How can Family Council communicate more effectively to the Cassellholme's community of family and friends? Is a Family Council *Facebook* page a possibility?

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

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Chair, Blanche-Hélène Tremblay

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Recorder, Karen Gooch