

TO: All Staff

FROM: Angie Punnett, Administrator

DATE: November 14, 2022

RE: **COVID 19 IMMUNIZATION POLICY UPDATE**

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Throughout the pandemic, Cassellholme's response to COVID-19 has been informed by Ministry of Health mandates and recommendations of public health authorities. As the COVID-19 pandemic has evolved, so too has public health measures and advice. In establishing Cassellholme's policy, we committed to making adjustments as public health recommendations change and as infection prevention and control measures evolve. Of primary importance, is protecting the health and well-being of our residents, clients and staff while safeguarding our ability to deliver a sustainable level of care and service to those we serve.

Following further consultation with long-term care homes in the area, recent changes to masking protocols in congregate care settings (during a COVID-19 outbreak), feedback from employees and families, and in consideration of the decision to discontinue access to PCR testing at the local assessment centre, we have been prompted to re-evaluate the impact of the Ministry's recommendations for a fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) booster dose in the definition of up to date vaccination status, within our workplace. **Effective immediately, we will consider "up to date" vaccination status to include the primary series (I,II) plus a third (3<sup>rd</sup>) booster dose.** As noted earlier, the definition of "up to date", in this policy, shall remain subject to change based on the guidance of public health authorities, Ministry mandates and consultation in the long-term care sector, both locally and provincially.

As we move forward, we will continue to take action to keep our residents, clients, and employees safe. Effective November 21<sup>st</sup>, our rapid testing frequency will be aligned with vaccination status –

- An employee with a 3<sup>rd</sup> booster dose will be tested every second day of work;
- An employee with a 4<sup>th</sup> booster dose will be tested twice (2x) a week.

In the absence of access to local PCR testing, Cassellholme is in the process of creating an on-site COVID-19 rapid antigen testing procedure for staff. Further details will follow as the process is finalized.

We thank you for your patience, understanding and commitment to the evolving safety measures and vaccination criteria as we do our best to work through an ever-changing situation. We continue to strongly encourage all employees to keep their vaccinations current with all recommended doses for congregate care settings such as Cassellholme.