



# Physical Distancing in Long-Term Care Homes: Providing Social Engagement and Inspiring Hope

## Remember:

Due to COVID-19, **Persons Living with Dementia (PLWD)** may experience increased anxiety and/or confusion during this time. PLWD are currently isolated from family, friends and loved ones due to current visiting restrictions, which impact their mental health and ability to socialize with others.

Refer to Public Health and/or your organization's infection control policies and procedures for further, more detailed directions.

If possible, cohort staff, which means designate staff to one specific home area.

## Meal Times

- Consider staggered meal times
- Seat residents 2 meters apart or follow Public Health's most current physical distancing requirements
- Consider the option of having in-room meals or seat residents at their doorway with a meal to allow for supervision and distancing

## Environmental Considerations

- Post a meal schedule for each resident, to make all residents aware of any changes

## Programming

- When offering programming consider seating residents at different tables to ensure appropriate distancing
- Offer programming geared toward the resident and their interests/abilities
- Provide the resident with means of entertainment (activity kits, television, iPad, iPod, radio etc.) in their room
- Continue to engage with family through alternative methods (FaceTime, Skype, Zoom, video/audio recordings, window visits)
- Ensure that if resources are being shared between resident's that they can easily be sanitized (consider providing appropriate laminated items)
- If residents are able to write letters, encourage them to write to families, co-residents or staff
- If accessible, invite residents to sit by their windows in their room.
- Continue to promote doll therapy/robotic assistive devices therapy (be mindful of not sharing due to infection control protocols)
- Consider creating a schedule (for staff) to proactively check in on the resident and set them up with activities
- Consider the resident's daily routine. Use a visual prompt such as a whiteboard or schedule and have it posted where the resident can see it
- Consider the option of having in-room activities or seat residents at their doorway with staff facilitating in the hallway.

## Additional Considerations

- Consider sharing this resource with residents who are able to read and are seeking information regarding COVID-19:

[https://www.dementiability.com/resources/2-COVID-19-Book%20for-Dementia-in-LTC-in\\_Canada.pdf](https://www.dementiability.com/resources/2-COVID-19-Book%20for-Dementia-in-LTC-in_Canada.pdf)

## Acknowledgements:

Special thanks to the Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO) Psychogeriatric Resource Consultant (PRC) Team, and the Mississauga Halton Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO) Program for the development of this resource, April 2020.