

Coronavirus COVID-19

2020-03-17

Due to the progression of coronavirus disease COVID-19 worldwide and the gradual appearance of such infections in Québec, we are providing you with new information and instructions for intermediary and family-type resources.

Instructions for Intermediary and Family-Type Resources

The COVID-19 pandemic may bring up a number of questions related to everyday life and the activities of clients entrusted to intermediate and family-type resources (IR-FTR). It may also bring up questions concerning collective and national agreements. Consequently, we would like to provide you with some reminders and some instructions on prevention that are applicable to all, but are of particular importance when intervening with seniors.

Given the legal relationship that binds the resources and health and social service facilities, both parties must collaborate to ensure the continuity of services to clients, in compliance with laws, regulations, public health guidelines, and recognized practices.

State of Public Health Emergency

Most importantly, effective Saturday, March 14, 2020, all visits have been suspended at all hospital centres, long-term care facilities (CHSLD), private seniors' residences, and intermediate (IR) and family-type resources (FTR) for seniors. To maintain contact between clients and their friends and family, we ask that telephone calls or other means of communication be prioritized.

Like CHSLDs and private residences for seniors, IR-FTR facilities—who care for diverse clientèles—must respect these directives. Depending on their medical condition, individuals with a loss of autonomy, a cognitive disorder, an intellectual impairment, a physical impairment, an autism spectrum disorder, or a mental disorder, as well as youth in difficulty, may develop complications resulting from COVID-19 contamination.

Contact and Outings of Clients (patients) and Relatives

As a result, visits with relatives and friends, as well as outings to visit relatives and friends, are not allowed at this time. This applies to all clients in your residence. Given the public health emergency that has been declared, case managers are asked to inform parents, relatives, and resources to explain the suspension of contact with the client. An assessment of the overall health condition of both the client and the resource are also noted in the file. The suspension of all types of contact is required, both on the part of family and friends and on the part of the client. Staff at facilities must support IR-FTR caregivers in ensuring that clients as well as their relatives understand the prevention, self-quarantine, or isolation measures required, related to the symptoms and resulting diagnosis. It is the resource's responsibility to monitor client's physical or mental health of the physical and mental health changes. (see links below for further information).

Nonessential Outings

All non-essential appointments and activities—annual dental check-ups, social activities, or part-time work—are suspended for the time being. This is the essence of social distancing and isolation measures recommended to date. As well it is required to assess whether regular services should be maintained (weekly psychological follow-ups, child psychiatry appointments, etc.), depending on the health of the client.

Access to Emergency Childcare for IR-FTR employees and Foster Family Caregivers

Emergency childcare is available to those working in IR-FTR, as these are considered essential services. In the current context, childcare services will be available for the employees of intermediate and family-type resources to ensure the continuity of service in these settings. This measure also aims to allow Foster family caregivers who also work in essential services access to childcare for the children in their charge.

Monitoring the Health of Confined Clients

Given this exceptional pandemic, health establishments carry out a clinical evaluation of each situation along with the resource and make decisions that respect the directives issued by the Public Health authorities; subject to change as the situation continues to evolve. (<https://www.quebec.ca/sante/problemes-de-sante/a-z/coronavirus-2019/>).

Placement/Relocation

Although all efforts are made to avoid placing or relocating clients at this time, there will be unavoidable situations to manage, particularly with regard to the Youth Protection Act. In this regard, collective and national agreements stipulate that the resource is responsible for receiving any client referred to it by the establishment, except under exceptional circumstances.

The state of public health emergency declared by the Québec Premier is an exceptional circumstance. We will need to manage with the concerns that arise from it. Collaboration with resources and associations must therefore be privileged in order to achieve optimal pairing/placement under the circumstances. If an optimal pairing is not possible, a temporary solution may be required.

Isolation

In the event that IR-FTR caregiver returned from travel abroad, a voluntary isolation period of 14 days is required, as is the case for all citizens (for details see <https://www.canada.ca/fr/sante-publique/services/maladies/2019-nouveau-coronavirus/professionnels-sante/directives-provisoires-cas-contacts.html#ann1>).

However, given that for many IR-FTR caregivers their residence is also their home, home isolation can pose a risk of contaminating the clients in their care. Thus, IR-FTR caregivers or staff returning from trips abroad or showing symptoms must speak with the establishment to determine the various options—taking into consideration their physical environment and service structure—to ensure the safety and protection of the clients entrusted to them.

As for exceptional costs that may be incurred due to the pandemic, resources must inform and reach an agreement with the institution to which they have a contract and keep a record of the expenses incurred.

Furthermore, like all Quebecers, the IR-FTR caregivers and staff intending to travel abroad must comply with the public health directives in place upon their return.

Prevention: Before Symptoms Emerge

As certain clientèles residing in IR-FTR are at a higher risk of developing complications, extra care is required with infection prevention activities. Currently, the most important elements to take into consideration are:

- Frequent hand washing;
- Implementing the institution's prevention and infection control procedures for staff, volunteers, and visitors;
Implementing control measures prohibiting access to visitors, friends and relatives, and volunteers:
- IR-FTR employees who have returned from travel abroad cannot be present or visit the resource for 14 days following their return;
- Establish rules for limiting visits in the event of an outbreak at the resource, in accordance with the recommendations of the institution;
- Establish rules for ensuring the flow of information among resource staff, if applicable;
- For up-to-date information, see: <https://www.quebec.ca/sante/problemes-de-sante/a-z/coronavirus-2019/>;
- For all questions concerning COVID-19, you can refer to 1-877-644-4545.
- **It is the responsibility of the IR-FTR manager to ensure compliance with the aforementioned guidelines.**

Useful References

Québec. ca website:

<https://www.quebec.ca/sante/problemes-de-sante/a-z/coronavirus-2019/#c46383>

Should you have questions or concerns, call 1-877-644-4545 (toll free).
