

## Greenwoods Eldercare Society Bulletin

### 17 April 2020

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#### Letter from Dr. Butcher

Please see attached a letter from Dr. Butcher, Greenwoods medical lead.

#### COVID-19 Precautions

With all of the distressing news regarding the spread of COVID-19 in long term care homes in other regions in the country, I continue to feel incredibly grateful for the support we're receiving provincially and especially regionally from Island Health. Many of the precautions that were announced in Quebec and Ontario only this week have been in place here since the beginning of the month including staff only working at one location, daily screening of Residents and team members, use of masks, enhanced cleaning, physically distancing of the Residents in common areas, and restricting access to the facility.

We continue have a sufficient supply of personal protective equipment (i.e. masks, gowns and gloves). Testing has been readily available if there are any concerns at all with the team members or Residents showing symptoms.

We participate in almost daily calls with Island Health's senior clinical and management teams. The offer of support and assistance is always there and the communication and resources provided are excellent.

Through the dedication and commitment of the team, we are well staffed and have been able to increase the activity worker hours.

On behalf of the entire team, I want to reassure you that we will continue to do our utmost to keep our Residents safe and to help them enjoy a good quality of life through these challenging times.

Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns or if there is anything we can do to support you.

Warmest regards

Aletha

17 April 2020

Dear Resident Family Member/Representative

In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, I would like to reassure you that the team here at Greenwoods continues to work with Island Health and the Ministry of Health with an aim to prevent the spread of the virus. To date there have been no cases of COVID-19 at any long term care (LTC) sites in the Island Health region.

I appreciate that not being able to visit with your family member is particularly difficult and thank you for your understanding as we continue to follow directives from the Provincial Health Officer. I hope you have been able to take part in video chats or calls with your loved ones in order to stay connected and I sincerely hope that things will return to a more “normal” situation soon.

By now, you have no doubt learned that COVID-19 is more dangerous for our elderly population, especially those who are frail and who have other chronic illnesses. We have all read about the devastation this virus has caused in LTC homes across the world and the treatment at this point is limited to oxygen, encouraging oral fluids and medication to relieve symptoms, all of which can be provided in place. We are also aware though of how rapidly the virus can spread in a long term care environment to residents and staff alike, despite using the best precautions we can to prevent spread.

Given the research into the spread of the SARS-CoV2 virus (COVID-19) in LTC facilities, Island Health’s Chief Medical Officer has issued a new directive to attempt to cohort (group) patients who have tested positive for COVID-19 into designated cohort sites. For our area, the designated COVID-19 cohort site is currently at the Royal Jubilee Hospital (RJH) in Victoria. We appreciate that transferring a Resident from Greenwoods to RJH would be a significant change to the plan of care. If a Resident does get transferred to a different facility, such as RJH, we would not anticipate a change in their individual goals of care or medical management. The intention of transferring a Resident who is positive with COVID-19 is to prevent the spread of the disease to others.



We are doing everything possible to prevent the virus from impacting our Residents at Greenwoods. In the event that a Resident does become ill, a discussion will occur at that time with the Medical Health Officer, myself and the Resident's regular GP as to the direction of care. We will explore all options of supporting the Resident on Salt Spring. If, however; the direction is to transfer the Resident, we will ensure that this is done as comfortably as possible and that the receiving team is thoroughly briefed on the Resident's care needs. We will keep you informed at all times.

It remains our goal to avoid transfer to hospital whenever possible. ***Please note that this directive is strictly for COVID-19 positive patients in this unprecedented pandemic situation.***

Should you have any questions regarding this directive or any other concerns please contact Barb Williams or Aletha Humphreys at Greenwoods. They can arrange a time with either myself or the Resident's own GP for a discussion.

Thank you for your understanding and support as we continue to navigate through the pandemic.

With kind regards at this challenging time,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Butcher M.D.', with a stylized flourish above the name.

Dr. David Butcher  
Medical Lead Greenwoods