

# EPIDEMIC AND PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS AND MANAGEMENT PLAN (POLICY AND PROCEDURES)

## Purpose

As part of the Homes' overall emergency planning framework, this *Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness and Management Plan* provides specific guidance on how to mitigate, prepare, respond and recover from an epidemic or pandemic of infectious disease of public health significance

## DEFINITIONS

### Disease Surveillance Data

- Serves as an early warning system for impending outbreaks that could become public health emergencies, enables monitoring and evaluation of the impact of an intervention, helps track progress towards specified goals, and
- Monitors and clarifies the epidemiology of health problems, guiding priority-setting and planning and evaluation public health policy and strategies

### Epidemic

An outbreak of infection that spreads rapidly and affects many individuals in a given area or population at the same time

### Pandemic

An epidemic occurring worldwide, crossing international boundaries and usually affecting a large number of people

### Precautionary Principle

Where there is reasonable evidence of an impending threat to public health, it is inappropriate to require proof of causation beyond a reasonable doubt before taking steps to avert the threat

## PARAMEDIC AND SENIORS SERVICES

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## Emergency

An urgent or pressing situation or condition presenting an imminent threat to the health or well-being of residents and others attending the home that requires immediate action to ensure the safety of persons in the home

**Note:** An appropriate authority may declare an epidemic or pandemic

## Policy

The key requirements of this policy are:

1. The Homes must have an epidemic and pandemic plan. The Homes' plan is broken down into three stages:
    - A precautionary and mitigation stage: To be used by the Homes before any epidemic or pandemic is declared
    - A response stage: To be used by the Homes when an epidemic or pandemic is declared
    - A recovery stage(s): To be used by the Homes when an epidemic or pandemic is declared over
- Note:** all three stages may be in effect at the same time
2. The Homes must be guided by the precautionary principle in activating their epidemic and pandemic plan, which means it may be activated prior to an epidemic or pandemic is officially declared by an appropriate authority
  3. The Homes must ensure that clinical oversight and medical services continue to be available at the Homes always during an epidemic or pandemic
  4. Equipment and Supplies: The Homes will ensure staff have access to resources, supplies, personal protective equipment, and equipment to adequately respond to a pandemic or epidemic
    - All staff and students will undergo respirator-fit testing (such as N95s)
  5. Reporting: The Home must report an outbreak of a disease of public health significance or communicable disease as defined in the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* the Ministry of Long-Term Care immediately
  6. Education and Training: All staff, students and volunteers will be provided with education and training on the *Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness and Response Plan* at orientation and annually thereafter

## Procedures

This section contains the following procedures related to *Epidemic and Pandemic Emergency Plan*:

### A. Activating the Precautionary and Mitigation Stage

- B. Activating the Response Stage
- C. During an Epidemic or Pandemic
- D. Post Epidemic and Pandemic Procedures and Documentation

## A. Activating the Precautionary and Mitigation Stage

### 1. Epidemic and pandemic surveillance measures

**The IPAC Lead (or designate) and Medical Director in consultation with the IPAC Committee will:**

- Routinely review the emergence of disease surveillance data to determine whether an infectious disease outbreak (anywhere in the world) could trigger the need for the Home to enter a precautionary and mitigation stage. See *Outbreak Preparedness and Management Plan* for more details on day-to-day activities that support an effective outbreak management system
- Guided by the precautionary principle, provide a recommendation that the Home(s) activate precautionary and mitigation measures at the Homes using:
  - Directives, guidance and other materials issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Long-Term Care
  - Emergency Orders issued by the Provincial government
  - Any available advice or guidance from Public Health Ontario on specific IPAC controls for the infectious disease, and
  - Discussion with relevant stakeholders

### 2. Activating Precautionary and Mitigation Measures

**In response to recommendation to activate precautionary and mitigation measures at the Homes, the Administrator will:**

- Determine whether to enter a precautionary and mitigation stage AND which mitigation and control measures are needed

**If the precautionary and mitigation stage is active, the Administrator will:**

- Inform and consult with the Director, Seniors Services on whether to activate the Incident Management System (IMS) and any other emergency plans (e.g., contingency staffing plan, food and fluid provision plan) as required. See *Long-Term Care Emergency Plan*
- Communicate the mitigation and preparedness control measures to the IPAC committee members at the Home
- Ensure that mitigation and preparedness control measures are implemented

- Review the infectious disease control measures to determine whether they continue to meet the needs of the Home

**The IPAC lead will:**

- Continue to monitor key indicators and reliable literature sources. See IPAC lead role and responsibilities
- Update the IPAC Committee Members

## B. Activating the Response Stage

**Upon receipt of a directive from the local or provincial Medical Officer of Health requiring the adoption or implementation of policies or measures concerning infectious diseases, the IPAC lead will:**

- Convene a special IPAC Committee meeting
- Recommend the IPAC infectious disease control measures to the IPAC committee members at the Home using:
  - Directives, guidance and other materials issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health (or designate)
  - Directives, guidance and other materials issued by the Ministry of Health, Public Health Ontario, Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee and/or the Ministry of Long-Term Care
  - Emergency Orders issued by the Provincial or Municipal government (e.g., York Region)
  - Best available infectious disease evidence, as current
  - The continued application of the precautionary principle, the Homes' ethical framework and any additional measures established in the precautionary and mitigation stage
- Review and establish a preliminary case definition for the potential outbreak. Included should be clinical signs and symptoms, time frame of onset of illness, location in the home

**Note:** If one person is identified with an infectious disease (associated with epidemic or pandemic), activate the *Outbreak Preparedness and Management Plan*

**Note:** Activating the *Outbreak Preparedness and Management Plan* does not deactivate the *Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness and Management Plan*

- Ensure that infectious disease control measures are implemented

## C. During the Epidemic or Pandemic

### All staff will:

- Support and respond to *Infectious Disease Control Measures*

### Members of the IPAC Committee will:

- Attend IPAC committee meetings and carry out outbreak mitigation and control responsibilities

### The IPAC lead (or designate) will:

- Update the Administrator (or designate during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours)
- Identify the resources, supplies, PPE and equipment relevant to the infectious disease outbreak

### The Administrator (or designate during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours) will:

- Provide any updates required by Incident Management System (IMS). See *Long-Term Care Emergency Plan*

## D. Post Epidemic and Pandemic Procedures and Documentation

**Upon receipt of communications from the local or Chief Medical Officer of Health regarding the expiration of any epidemic or pandemic directives to cease policies/measures concerning infectious diseases, the IPAC lead (or designate) will:**

- Ensure all emergency response equipment is replenished and cleaned
- In collaboration with Director of Care (or designate) and Administrator (or designate) develop an Epidemic and Pandemic Recovery Plan to resume of normal operations in the Home

**Note:** The Home may activate a recovery plan **before** deactivating its response to the infectious disease (e.g., response and recovery measures may happen at the same time)

### All staff will:

- Support and implement epidemic and pandemic recovery measures
- Continue to support and implement any Infectious Disease Control Measures that remain in place

### The IPAC lead (or designate) will:

- Conduct debrief(s) and other actions as required by the *Long-Term Care Emergency Recovery Plan*

**The Director of Care (or designate) will:**

- Follow the *Mandatory and Critical Incident Reporting Policy and Procedures*

**The Administrator (or designate during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours) will:**

- In consultation with the Director, Seniors Services:
  - Deactivate the Incident Management System (IMS), if activated
  - Notify Seniors Services Wellbeing Team to ensure staff supports are in place for those who experienced distress
- Communicate epidemic and pandemic recovery plan details to those in the Home, as required

## Roles and Responsibilities

### IPAC Lead

- Recommend infectious disease control measures at the Home)
- Manage and oversee the IPAC program at the Home (such as convening the IPAC committee)
- Complete actions identified in the *Emergency Recovery Plan*
- Identify resources, supplies, PPE and equipment relevant to the infectious disease response kit

### Medical Director (part of OMT)

- Advising on and approving clinical policies and procedures
- Providing oversight of resident clinical care in the home

### Outbreak Management Team (OMT)

- Implement the IPAC program and the epidemic and pandemic response at the Home (such as implementing the IPAC mitigation and control measures as directed by York Region public health unit)
- Collectively responsible for infectious disease contact tracing of staff, students, volunteers and visitors

### **IPAC Team/Committee**

- Responsible for supporting the IPAC Lead to carry out all required responsibilities under the applicable legislation and standards
- Identify quality improvements to the *Outbreak Preparedness and Management Plan*

### **York Region Public Health Unit (as the local Public Health Unit)**

- Investigate and manage any persons under investigation, confirmed cases, and/or outbreaks in the home. Includes resident contact tracing, follow up, and case reporting
- Implementing chief or local medical officer of health directives or guidance

### **Joint Health & Safety Committee**

- See Joint Health and Safety Committees

### **Emergency Management Specialist**

- Provide education and training on Emergency Plans
- Complete After-Action Review (AAR) as required by the *Long-Term Care Emergency Recovery Plan*

### **Education and Wellbeing Teams**

- Ensure staff supports are in place for those who experienced distress
- Maintain staff records of education and training

### **Communications Associate**

- See *LTC Emergency Communications Plan*

### **Director, Seniors Services**

- Ensure resources available to support the Homes implementing the *Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness and Response Plan*

### **Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-call (after hours)**

- Following consultation with the Director, Seniors Services, activate the Incident Management System (IMS) for infectious disease outbreaks, if required and deactivate when emergency is over, as required
- Activate infectious disease control measures in the precautionary and mitigation stage
- Coordinate the resumption of normal operations in the Home

## AUTHORITY

*Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021; General Regulation 246/22; Health Protection and Promotion Act; Occupational Health and Safety Act; Accreditation Standards; and York Region Seniors Services Administration*

**Alternate formats or communications supports are available upon request by contacting [newmarkethealthcentre@york.ca](mailto:newmarkethealthcentre@york.ca) or [maplehealthcentre@york.ca](mailto:maplehealthcentre@york.ca).**