

Northwood

Northwood Outbreak Timeline

The following timeline provides a detailed account of the steps and measures taken at Northwood's Halifax facility in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Please note that while the outbreak is at the Halifax facility, these steps and measures were also taken at the Northwood facility in Bedford where there have been no confirmed cases among residents or staff as of July 3, 2020.

- Actions taken by Northwood are coded in **GREEN**
 - Directives from the provincial government are coded in **BLUE**
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February 5 initial sharing of information on Novel Coronavirus Information - NS Public Health officials are working closely with federal, provincial and territorial counterparts to ensure any cases are rapidly identified and managed to protect the health of Canadians.

Heightened respiratory surveillance in LTC facilities including testing and implementing isolation and precautions including PPE for contact.

March 2 Pandemic plan updated and refined to reflect COVID-19 situation

March 2 Activated pandemic plan; message to residents/families/employees

Residents who travel outside Canada, or who visit people outside of the facility who have travelled outside Canada, require quarantine for 14 days

Screening by telephone required for staff who have travelled outside Canada

Heightened respiratory surveillance: daily monitoring for symptoms of colds and fevers for all residents, with daily reporting to Infection Control to monitor for data collection and monitoring trends

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): inventory of masks, gown, shields monitored daily; sufficient supply; will be allocated by IC if respiratory symptoms are identified; all staff expected to complete education session on proper use of PPE and review hand hygiene technique

Increased environmental disinfection for frequently touched areas such as door knobs, handrails, elevator buttons, etc.; housekeepers will be regularly disinfecting frequently touched areas throughout the facilities; staff advised to disinfect common work stations/shared work spaces frequently

March 4 General communication to staff/families/visitors on COVID-19: have a pandemic plan and are working with Public Health on steps to prepare

March 10 Restricts visitors/volunteers from entering Northwood facilities if they have travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days

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- March 13** Visitor and staff screening at all entrances; resident visiting is restricted to two designated visitors; no children under 16; no large programs/activities; device disinfection
- March 13** Self isolation mandated due to travel
- March 16** No longer permitting visitors of any kind; residents cannot leave the facility for social visits—if they do, they will not be permitted to return to the facility until the “no visitors” mandate has been lifted; all staff, palliative resident visitors, and contractors [screened](#) at the main entrance*
- March 19** Restaurants closed to dining in
- March 21** Dental office closures (unless emergency)
- March 22** Hold on respite bed admissions
- March 23** Self isolation when entering Nova Scotia, social distancing, business closures unless essential, school and daycare closures, virtual care for primary care
- March 25** As per WHO recommendations, staff are to wear a procedural mask when entering a room where a resident is suspected to have, or is confirmed to have, COVID-19; N95 masks for aerosol-generating medical procedures only in long-term care setting
- March 26** Directive mandating no loss of pay for Home Support Workers due to COVID-19
- March 27** Suspending all drop offs/deliveries to residents
- March 29** Staff assigned to specific sites from labour pool in an effort to reduce facility-to-facility spread
- March 31** Establishing a cohort area: temporarily relocating some residents to alternative rooms/locations to create a cohort area prepared to care for residents if they get sick with COVID-19
- March 31** Schools being used to assemble PPE
- April 2** Northwood notified by Public Health through contact tracing that our Home Support staff were exposed to COVID 19 in a home; information was not disclosed upon pre-screening in the home
- April 5** One long-term care staff member tests positive; Public Health supports contact tracing, testing, and ensuring appropriate measures are put in place; Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) protocol including masking activated for long-term care employees
- April 6** Northwood begins masking all employees; no PPE supply concerns
- April 7** First residents (five) test positive, transferred to treatment floor/cohort area
- April 9** Self-isolation requirements for home care workers in close contact with positive case communicated and activated; Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), Continuing Care Branch, waving financial assessment requirement to facilitate prompt admissions

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to long-term care to allow hospitals to respond to projected increases in volume; An email was sent to the Halifax campus explaining the test process and required isolation; Northwood swabbed 131 staff between the April 6 and 9 and those staff had to remain off until results were received which was up to 4 days to follow the current guidelines.

- April 12** Surgical mask now mandatory for health care workers in long-term care facilities
- April 14** Installation of thermal cameras for Halifax Centre and Bedford main entrances as adjunct to staff screening efforts at those locations; Northwood begins testing its own residents and staff, allowing expedited testing and receipt of results; testing conducted on anyone with symptoms, as well as close contacts, and continual contact tracing and testing staff.
- April 17** Interim Public Health measures put in place by the province
- April 18** Death of first three residents reported; staff travelling between facilities is limited; full “swab team” (consisting of testing experts from Public Health) on site to help with mass testing
- April 19** Nova Scotia Health Authority (NSHA) Infection Control experts (two) on site in addition to Northwood’s infection control resources; implementation of emergency plan; first recovered resident moved to the established recovery unit offsite, focused on recovery and restorative care
- April 20** Northwood Emergency Operations Centre established with NSHA & Department of Health and Wellness (DHW) support; increased staffing resources from other partner organizations coordinated through Emergency Operations Centre (EOC); Ministerial Directive, redeploying staff from the HI COVID-19 unit to Northwood; increased resources to provide families with more frequent updates
- April 22** All residents being tested for COVID-19; virtual press conference; video posted online
- April 26** Directive clarification for Long-Term Care (LTC) staff working in multiple locations
- April 28** Acute oxygen therapy and staffing guidelines for COVID-19 residents
- April 29** Virtual press conference; video posted online
- May 1** Golf courses/campgrounds, maintenance allowed; virtual religious services permitted
- May 2** Recorded message to Northwood community
- May 6** Virtual press conference; video posted online
- May 8** COVID-19 Public Health guidelines provided for home and community care
- May 9** Recorded message to Northwood community

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- May 13** Virtual press conference; video posted online
 - May 17** Recorded message to Northwood community
 - May 20** Northwood met with Dr. Lynn Johnson, NSHA Infection Control Physician, to review infection control procedures
 - May 22** Recorded message to Northwood community
 - May 25** The last confirmed resident case
 - May 28** The last confirmed staff case
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For information about scheduled family visits, please see our visitation guidelines for [Halifax](#) and [Bedford](#).

Regular Northwood updates and videos can be found on the [Information Updates page](#) of our website.