

Ministry of Long-Term Care

Assistant Deputy Minister
Long-Term Care Operations

11th Floor, 1075 Bay Street
Toronto ON M5S 2B1
Tel.: (416) 327-7461
Fax: (416) 327-7603

Ministère des Soins de longue durée

Sous-ministre adjointe
Opérations relatives aux soins de longue durée

1075, rue Bay, 11e étage
Toronto ON M5S 2B1
Téléphone: (416) 327-7461
Télécopieur: (416) 327-7603



November 17, 2020

MEMORANDUM TO: Long-Term Care Sector

FROM: Sheila Bristo
Assistant Deputy Minister
Long-Term Care Operations Division

SUBJECT: **COVID-19: Long-term care preparedness plan: Infection Prevention and Control Initiatives**

I am writing to follow up on the recently announced investments and initiatives to support you, your staff, and residents in our efforts to prevent and manage COVID-19.

I would like to share more information related to Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) initiatives specifically.

As you know, long-term care licensees are required to meet a number of requirements under the Ontario Long-Term Care Homes Act related to IPAC programming.

Key initiatives that have been announced are intended to further support homes in this area.

\$61.4M in new in-year funding for minor capital improvements linked to IPAC.

This funding is intended to help long-term care homes make rapid priority physical infrastructure upgrades that will improve IPAC conditions and practices in homes. All homes will receive an allocation, with funding being weighted towards homes with older facilities where IPAC-minor capital needs are likely to be higher than those built to newer standards. Eligible measures will include (but are not limited to) minor renovations to support physical distancing, plumbing or water supply cleaning and repair, upgrading HVAC systems or repairing and/or replacing furniture and equipment that cannot be fully cleaned. In addition, homes already in receipt of the Long-Term Care Minor Capital Program will be able to use their allocation from that program towards eligible IPAC expenses as well.

The Ministry announced details of this funding, including the funding formula and eligible expense criteria, on October 9, 2020. Homes have now received their allocations.

\$30 million in new in-year funding for IPAC staffing and training.

This funding includes \$20 million directed to the hiring of new staff and \$10 million intended for training and education of new and existing personnel. The personnel hired and/or to be trained using this funding should be dedicated to IPAC programming in the home.

This funding is being flowed to Local Health Integration Networks for distribution to long-term care homes.

Provincial Centres of IPAC Expertise (Hubs) Program

As part of the province's comprehensive plan [Keeping Ontarians Safe: Preparing for Future Waves of COVID-19](#), local networks of infection prevention and control (IPAC) expertise are being developed from across the health system. These local networks or hubs will work to enhance IPAC practices in long-term care homes and other community-based congregate living settings, including retirement homes, residential settings for adults and children funded by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS), shelters, and supportive housing.

Through this new province-wide network, long-term care homes and other congregate living settings will be able to quickly access IPAC expertise, collaborative assistance and just-in-time advice, guidance and direct support on IPAC practices for both prevention and response.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Long-Term Care and the Ministry of Health, Ontario Health has identified hospital or public health units from across the province to lead local IPAC hubs. These organizations will work with partners at the local health system who have IPAC expertise to ensure that this specialized guidance and support is available to congregate living settings through a one-window model with local public health units retaining the responsibility and oversight for outbreak management.

IPAC hubs will:

- Identify and monitor IPAC training and practice needs within their catchment area - including in congregate living settings funded and overseen by the Ministry of Health (MOH), Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC), Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility (MSAA), Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) and the Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services (MCCSS).
- Strengthen current partnerships and broker new ones; supporting a network of IPAC service providers and experts, and working to align local resources to IPAC needs within congregate living settings for both prevention and response. Services will be allocated according to a risk-based framework.

- Bring forward and escalate issues of concern that are outside of the scope of IPAC through established mechanisms with ministry partners.

Local public health and Public Health Ontario (PHO) are key partners in each local hub. Working in coordination with the hub, public health partners will support the provision of IPAC knowledge, training and expertise, building on existing local partnerships. In addition to contributing to hubs as IPAC experts, the local public health unit retains the responsibility to oversee the management of outbreaks.

The role of the long-term care homes includes:

- IPAC delivery/programming in the home, which is compliant with current statutory and other requirements for the sector;
- IPAC leadership in the home;
- IPAC-related staffing plans and surge capacity to support disease outbreaks;
- Working collaboratively with the hub and drawing on expertise provided,
- Disseminating knowledge, expertise and assistance from the hub to the home and to peers and colleagues as/when appropriate;
- Providing access to education programs to enhance knowledge and skills of staff members such as Public Health Ontario's IPAC training;
- Ensuring that policies and procedures are in place that enable and support strong IPAC practices during an outbreak such as mechanisms to increase environmental cleaning, cohorting plans, communications protocols and processes to obtain Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Approximately 25 hubs are being established across the province. Several of them are already up and running with the remainder expected to be in place throughout November.

Homes will be contacted by your local hub shortly with additional information regarding next steps. IPAC personnel in homes are expected to participate in their local hub.

In closing, I would like to thank you again for your tireless efforts during this very challenging time.

Sincerely,

original signed by

Sheila Bristo
Assistant Deputy Minister
Long-Term Care Operations Division

Attachments

- IPAC Hub Description
- IPAC Hub FAQs

c:

Richard Steele, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Long-Term Care
Donna Duncan, Chief Executive Officer, Ontario Long Term Care Association
Lisa Levin, Chief Executive Officer, AdvantAge Ontario
Catherine Brown, Interim Executive Lead, Ontario Health
Mark Walton, Transitional Regional Lead (West Region), Ontario Health
Donna Cripps, Transitional Regional Lead (Central Region), Ontario Health
Tess Romain, Transitional Regional Lead (Toronto Central), Ontario Health
Renato Discenza, Transitional Regional Lead (East Region), Ontario Health
Dr. Rhonda Crocker-Ellacott, Transitional Regional Lead (North Region), Ontario Health
Janet Hope, Assistant Deputy Minister, Long-Term Care Policy Division
Olha Dobush, Executive Lead, Long-Term Care Stabilization
Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health