

Ministry of Long-Term Care

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DATE: July 22, 2021

MEMORANDUM TO: Long-Term Care Home Licensees
Long-Term Care Home Administrators
Long-Term Care Home Directors of Nursing and Personal Care

FROM: Brad Robinson
Director, Long-Term Care Inspections Branch

RE: **Food and Nutrition in Long-Term Care Homes - Auditor General Recommendations**

The final report from the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario's 2019 value-for-money (VFM) audit related to Food and Nutrition in Long-Term Care Homes was released on December 4, 2019. The report included a total of 19 recommendations with 31 action items.

The purpose of this memo is to serve as a reminder of the legislation related to **four** of these recommendations and associated action items, specifically recommendations #2, 4, 13, and 18. The Ministry is also sharing the link to a best practice document from the Dietitians of Canada that may assist you with meeting the recommendations made to the sector.

A link to the final report can be found here [Food and Nutrition in Long-Term Care Homes, OAGO, 2019](#)

Please ensure that this memo is communicated to all staff in the long-term care home (LTC home).

The Ministry will update the sector as the other recommendations made by the Auditor General related to Food and Nutrition in Long-Term Care Homes are actioned.

Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Regards,



Brad Robinson

c: AdvantAge Ontario
Ontario Long-Term Care Association

RECOMMENDATIONS AND MINISTRY OF LONG-TERM CARE REMINDERS

Recommendation	Ministry of Long-Term Care Reminders
<p>Recommendation #2 -To remind long-term-care homes of the importance of providing residents with safe and appropriate food and nutrition services that are in accordance with their plans of care and reduce the risk of food-related harm to residents, we recommend that the Ministry of Long-Term Care confirm during its inspection process that all direct-care staff are able to know the residents' plans of care for food and nutrition before serving food</p>	<p>Licensees are reminded to continue to ensure that there is a process in place to provide direct-care staff access to each residents' plan of care for food and nutrition, before serving food, to comply with <i>Ontario Regulation 79/10, s. 73(1)5</i>:</p> <p>Every licensee of a long-term care home shall ensure that the home has a dining and snack service that includes, at a minimum, the following elements:</p> <p>5. process to ensure the food service workers and other staff assisting residents are aware of the residents' diets, special needs and preferences.</p> <p>Licensees and long-term care (LTC) homes are encouraged to use the Dining Observation Inspection Protocol as part of their continuous quality improvement program to reduce the risk of food-related harm to residents.</p>
<p>Recommendation #4 - To confirm that long-term-care homes are meeting the residents' dietary needs as assessed in their plans of care and proactively mitigate nutritional risks to residents, we recommend that the Ministry of Long-Term Care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• monitor whether long-term-care homes' staff are complying with internal policies to refer residents for registered dietitian	<p>Licensees are reminded to continue to proactively mitigate nutritional risks to residents by ensuring that each resident is assessed, and their plan of care complies with <i>Ontario Regulation 79/10, s.26(3)13 and s.26(3)14</i>:</p> <p>A plan of care must be based on, at a minimum, interdisciplinary assessment of the following with respect to the resident:</p> <p>13. Nutritional status, including height, weight and any risks relating to nutrition care</p>

<p>assessment and maintain complete and accurate resident food and fluid consumption records;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • during their inspections, review long-term care homes' system for monitoring resident food and fluid consumption as a whole to see how they proactively minimize the nutrition and hydration risk posed to other residents. 	<p>14. Hydration status and any risks relating hydration</p> <p>Licensees are also reminded as per <i>Ontario Regulation 79/10, s. 68(2)</i> to ensure that the nutrition care, dietary services and hydration programs include,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the development and implementation, in consultation with a registered dietitian who is a member of the staff of the home, of policies and procedures relating to nutrition care and dietary services and hydration; (b) the identification of any risks related to nutrition care and dietary services and hydration; (c) the implementation of interventions to mitigate and manage those risks; (d) a system to monitor and evaluate the food and fluid intake of residents with identified risks related to nutrition and hydration. <p><i>Ontario Regulation 79/10, s.30(1)</i> requires every licensee of a long-term care home to ensure that the following is complied with in respect of each of the organized programs required under sections 8 to 16 of the Act, and each of the interdisciplinary programs required under section 48 of this Regulation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There must be a written description of the program that includes its goals and objectives and relevant policies, procedures and protocols and provides for methods to reduce risk and monitor outcomes, including protocols for the referral of residents to specialized resources where required. <p>Long-term care homes are encouraged to utilize the Nutrition and Hydration Inspection Protocol as part of their continuous quality improvement program.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish protocols for registered dietitians to allocate more time for observing residents eating at mealtimes, attending resident-care conferences and providing education to residents, staff and family members. 	<p>RDs and licensees can review the time allotted for the RDs in the LTC home to determine if more time is required.</p> <p><i>Ontario Regulation 79/10, s. 74(2)</i> requires the licensee to ensure that a registered dietitian who is a member of the staff of the home is on site at the home for a minimum of 30 minutes per resident per month to carry out clinical and nutrition care duties.</p> <p>The requirement in the regulation is considered a minimum requirement.</p> <p>Licensees are reminded that currently, they may expense in the Program and Support Services envelope expenditures related to the provision of 30 minutes per resident per month of registered dietitian time to carry out clinical and nutritional care duties consistent with</p>

	<p><i>Ontario Regulation 79/10, s. 74(2)</i>. The expenditure of the 30 minutes must be related to registered dietitian salary and benefits only. Expenditures beyond the 30 minutes are to be expensed to the Other Accommodation envelope.</p> <p>Protocols for how registered dietitians (RDs) spend their time in long-term care have been developed by subject matter experts at the Dietitians of Canada.</p> <p>For further information about the dietitian’s role in long-term care related to monitoring intake, referral processes and other best practices for nutrition and food service in long-term care use the link found here: Best Practices for Nutrition, Food Service and Dining in LTC Homes, 2019. (Note: scroll to the bottom of the page of this link to download the best practices working paper).</p> <p>Existing legislation, regulations, policies and standards relating to long-term care homes in Ontario take precedence over these guidelines.</p>
<p>Recommendation #13 - To minimize the risk of gastroenteritis outbreaks in long-term-care homes, we recommend that the Ministry of Long-Term Care monitor to ensure that long-term-care homes regularly assess compliance with the Ministry of Health’s policy on hand hygiene around mealtimes, and correct on a timely basis any weaknesses that they identify through these reviews.</p>	<p>Licensees are reminded that the Director of the LTC Inspections Branch issued a memo to the LTC sector on October 25, 2019, entitled “Recommendations for the Prevention, Detection and Management of Infectious Outbreaks in Long-Term Care Homes (LTCHs), November 2018”. The memo which can be found posted on LTChomes.net, directed that the following two evidence-based documents were to be used to update the licensee’s IPAC program related to respiratory and gastrointestinal infections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care – Control of Respiratory Infection Outbreaks in Long-Term Care Homes, November 2018 • Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care – Recommendations for the Control of Gastroenteritis Outbreaks in LTC Homes, March 2018 <p>Note that hand hygiene recommendations for residents at mealtimes are included in these documents.</p> <p>The prevention and management of outbreaks in long-term care homes is vital. Licensees are also reminded that the Associate Deputy Minister, Long-Term Care Pandemic Response, directed long-term care homes, on May 4, 2021, to use the COVID-19 Guidance Document for Long-Term Care Homes in Ontario. The guidance document outlines outbreak management and suggests for information and guidance regarding general Infection Prevention and Control measures (for example, hand hygiene), homes should refer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infection Prevention and Control for Long-Term Care Homes Summary of Key Principles and Best Practices
<p>Recommendation #18 - To improve the well-being and safety of long-term-care home residents, we recommend that</p>	<p>As noted in recommendation #4 above, an example of a document that can be used for nutrition and food service best practices is the Dietitians of Canada Long-Term Care Action</p>

the Ministry of Long-Term Care identify commonly occurring issues related to food and nutrition from data collected through critical incidents and inspections, and **provide information and recommend best practices to long-term-care homes**

Group working paper, [Best Practices for Nutrition, Food Service and Dining in LTC Homes, 2019](#). (Note: scroll to the bottom of the page in the link to download the document).

Existing legislation, regulations, policies and standards relating to long-term care homes in Ontario take precedence over these guidelines.