

Cleveland, Wednesday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

Family Members

**RE: THIRTY-SECOND WALES COVID-19 UPDATE**

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Dear Family Members,

As you may know, the Estrie received doses of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. After the past ten months of craziness, this information is so profound; the end to this terrible pandemic is in sight. The scientific community's ingenuity is simply extraordinary; epidemiologists developed, tested, and manufactured a vaccine against a disease that was unknown to us just one long year ago. We are pleased that our Government prioritized immunizations for healthcare workers and seniors.

As I write this letter, I feel hopeful. The second round of COVID-19 testing for Norton 1 residents and employees is scheduled for tomorrow. Until everyone's results are negative, Norton 1 will remain under quarantine. I have good news; our employees who provide direct care with our residents living in our CHSLD will begin to receive the COVID-19 vaccine starting *today* and CHSLD Wales Inc. residents will be immunized on Monday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Please note that we will contact family representatives for verbal authorization to proceed with vaccinations. The COVID-19 vaccine is *not* mandatory. Like the flu vaccine, there are contraindications, which means that residents with severe anaphylactic reactions to vaccines should not be inoculated. Information about potential side effects will be provided as part of the consent process.

The Government announced that the next block of vaccines is prioritized for seniors living in seniors' residences and employees working in residential sectors including the Shaw and Manning wings. We expect that this campaign will begin before March. We have also been informed that primary caregivers aged seventy and above who are onsite a minimum of two days per week will be eligible to receive the vaccination at the same time as our residents and employees.

We encourage our residents, employees, family members, and volunteers to get vaccinated against COVID-19 to protect our families and friends, as the virus will no longer be able to live in your system. If you get inoculated, you will contribute to population immunity, which is an important step toward returning to "normal." I do want to warn you that there is a lot of misinformation circulating about this vaccine. Please make an informed decision based on facts from reputable sources, such as Health Canada, or speak to a healthcare provider. Please do not blindly believe what you read on social media.

Caring for seniors in long-term care is challenging at the best of times, requiring dedicated, compassionate people who take on this great responsibility with heart, skill, and devotion. The saying, "how a society treats its most vulnerable is the measure of its humanity" speaks volumes. I hope that living through this pandemic will help inform necessary decisions to benefit residents, their families, and the people who serve them.

We will continue to provide you with regular updates and will promptly notify you of any changes. Please do not hesitate to contact me with questions or concerns. You can also visit our website for more information at [www.waleshome.ca/all-the-news](http://www.waleshome.ca/all-the-news).

Merry Christmas to you and your family,



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