

Long-Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes: COVID-19 Guidelines for Communal Dining

Updated on: March 26, 2020

The Government of Ontario has banned all gatherings of over 50 people to help contain the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health of Ontarians. Dining halls in Long-Term Care Homes (LTCH) and Retirement Homes (RH) with over 50 people at a time, or with people in close proximity, is a high risk behaviour with potentially very serious outcomes in a vulnerable population.

Recommendations to LTCH/RH for Communal Dining

- Ensure less than 50 people dine at one time
- Remove and/or spread out tables and limit the number of people at each table, so that a **minimum of 2 meters** is between each resident
- Consider staggering meal times to allow enough distancing between residents
- Ensure [proper cleaning and disinfection](#) of tables after each use
- Ensure COVID-19 guidance for food premises are followed (attached)
- Ensure any resident who is ill or who is required to self-isolate is not allowed in the dining hall
- Consider cancelling communal dining, and taking food to each room instead

Additional information for LTCH/RH:

- [COVID-19 Information for Healthcare providers](#)
- [Ministry of Health Guidance for the Health Sector](#)
- [Public Health Agency of Canada information on social distancing](#)
- [Public Health Ontario COVID-19 cleaning and disinfection for public settings](#)