

As we enter the fall and winter months, we also enter 'Cold & Flu Season.' An increase of respiratory illnesses such as Colds, Flus, and COVID-19 in the community also leads to an increase of outbreaks in continuing care.

We take this opportunity to provide you with some important infection prevention and control information and reminders!

COVID-19 & INFLUENZA VACCINE CLINICS

- BSF strongly encourages all staff, residents, families, and visitors entering our sites to remain up to date with immunization for COVID -19 and Influenza in accordance with public health guidelines.
- BSF is in the process of working with our pharmacies to provide onsite COVID-19 & Influenza Vaccine Clinics for residents and staff (more information will be provided about the Vaccine Clinic schedules directly at each site).
- Families and visitors can learn more about Vaccines/Immunization and book an immunization appointment via Alberta Health Services (AHS) at www.ahs.ca, HealthLink 811, or a contact a Community Health Centre.

PERSONAL ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INFECTION

- **Frequent handwashing** is an important measure to prevent the spread of all infectious diseases such as colds and flus, COVID-19, and other respiratory or gastrointestinal (GI) illnesses.
- **Wearing a mask** is voluntary and encouraged! Although continuous masking is no longer required, everyone is required to follow the directions for use of masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE) required for isolation protocols and during outbreaks within our sites.
- **Stay home when you are sick:**
 - If you have respiratory virus symptoms or test positive for any respiratory illness you should **stay home until your symptoms have improved**, you feel well enough to resume normal activities, and you are free of fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
 - Anyone who is feeling unwell, regardless of whether they have tested positive for a respiratory virus or not, should **avoid visiting acute care or continuing care settings**.
 - It is recommended that you **wear a mask** when you are around others in indoor settings for a total of 10 days from when your symptoms started.

Protect Yourself & Others



Get Immunized



Wash your hands



Wear a mask



Keep your distance (2 m/6 ft)



Stay home when feeling unwell

PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES & BSF POLICY

- Please be assured that BSF follows all current requirements from AHS Communicable Disease Control (CDC) for Infection Prevention & Control (IPC) protocols.
- There have been no new directions from public health authorities beyond what is currently in place.
- BSF currently has no plans to require masking beyond current practices; however, this will continue to be assessed based on new information and ongoing risk assessment of the situation.
- We continue to closely monitor and evaluate the situation and will communicate any changes to our IPC and outbreak management practices that affect our staff, residents, families, and visitors at our sites.
- Engaging and communicating with all affected stakeholders is important to us! Should we be directed by public health or if BSF determines that any additional measures are required, we will ensure appropriate engagement and communication occurs.

OUTBREAK COMMUNICATIONS

BSF will continue to:

- Post outbreak signage at the entrance if the site is on outbreak (the reception team will have all current outbreak information and will be happy to answer your questions on entry to the site).
- Contact the relevant family/emergency contact regarding any changes to an individual resident's health status including symptoms of illness, test results, and applicable quarantine or isolation protocols for COVID-19, Influenza, or any illness.
- Notify our email contact lists for any exceptional circumstances as deemed necessary by site leadership including heightened risk and/or additional restrictions guided by AHS outbreak management.

Thank you for your cooperation in continuing to limit the spread of COVID-19, Influenza, and other illnesses from entering our sites, as we continue to work together to protect each other in our mission to optimize well-being and enrich people's lives.

Together, we remain BSF Strong!

