

14 May 2020

Dear people we support and families,

As the Government of Ontario prepares for the next phases in this pandemic, we wanted to take a moment and update you.

We heard earlier this week that the government has extended the state of emergency through to June 2<sup>nd</sup>. This extension helps inform organizations like CLGW. It lets us know that we can stay the course, right now, with the decisions and plans we have in place. Many of those plans and decisions were impacted in some way by emergency orders enacted during this state of emergency. What we do know is that some of the decisions that were made to protect vulnerable populations, should remain in effect through all three phases of re-opening our province, as [announced by the government](#).

So, at this time, all previously suspended services and access will remain suspended until further notice.

However, our team is looking at ways for families, friends and the people we support to visit with each other in a responsible and healthy way. While these conversations are early on and in consultation with Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health, we're discussing what that might look like. That includes practices around good physical distancing, should visits be indoors or outdoors, and variety of other criteria. We'll have more details in the coming weeks.

This pandemic has been isolating in so many ways for the people we support, their families, and our communities. Our routines have changed. The ways we connect with each other has changed. As we imagine what our new normal might look like, it's important that we continue to work together in an effort to keep everyone healthy and safe.

Late last week, the government announced an emergency order that allowed for school board employees to voluntarily support congregate care settings. This is great news for CLGW. In the event that one of our residential teams has to be on leave for an extended period of time, this is an added backup and assurance that we will be able to continue to provide appropriate levels of support.

We're also in conversations with WDG Public Health to build a plan for those who want to return to their CLGW residence. This conversation is also very early on. It will be essential to have good preventative measures in place to ensure everyone's health and wellbeing during these transitions. We will update as soon as we have more details.

Previously, we had shared about the [changes to eligible expenses under the Passport program](#). Should you have any questions, the Passport Community Developer for Wellington/Dufferin is available and [you can find more information online here](#).

In our last communication, we shared a couple of online trainings you could participate in. This time around, we wanted to share two mental health resources that we think might be great to have on hand.

First, from our friends in Waterloo Region, Carizon Family and Community Services has launched an online, self-serve mental health resource. Equipped with videos, practical ideas and articles, as well as useful tips and activities for a variety of ages, this website is a great tool. Check it out at: <https://www.carizonforthecommunity.ca/>

The folks at Shoppers Drug Mart also have a great online resource for taking care of your mental health. With tools and tips for stress management, maintaining a health mindset, meditation and stretching, as well as mindfulness, you'll find a little bit of everything to help your state of mind. You can learn more here: <https://www1.shoppersdrugmart.ca/en/health-and-pharmacy/covid-19-mental-health>

At present, we have one Direct Support Professional who is awaiting test results. To date, 34 Direct Support Professionals and 10 people who we support have been tested for COVID-19. Aside from two staff testing positive early on into the pandemic, we have been tremendously fortunate with good health across our organization. Our Direct Support Professionals are playing such an important role though all of this, adapting to changes and taking action quickly. We're hopeful that the preventative measures we have in place will continue to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of all involved.

We will continue to keep you informed of any new developments, and you can read the latest at: [clgw.ca/covid19](http://clgw.ca/covid19)

Regards,

  
**Laura Hanley**  
Executive Director

  
**Gerry Walsh**  
Board President