

March 27, 2020

Re: COVID-19 – ESS Update

Dear Clients and Caregivers,

This note is sent with the hope that you are staying well and safe.

As you are aware, our community group programs, Seniors' Lunch Programs, Adult Day Services, Falls Prevention and Exercise Programs have been suspended until April 5. ESS will extend these program suspensions for a further three weeks, until 12:01 a.m., April 26, 2020.

Our Assisted Living, In-Home Respite, 24/7 Caring Centre, Friendly Visiting and Telephone Reassurance programs continue uninterrupted as well as our Transportation services for essential reasons. However, to keep people safe, the number of individuals that we are able to take per ride is very limited.

We continue to ramp-up our wellness telephone checks and telephone reassurance activities to ensure we stay connected and to allow us to learn of special needs that ESS may be able to assist in addressing.

Given all that is happening in our lives as a result of COVID-19, no doubt people are feeling anxious. Recognizing this, ESS has taken this virus very seriously and has and will continue to implement measures to minimize the potential risks of providing care and support in this 'new normal' time.

We have briefed ourselves on the virus, using the best science available and drawing from international, national, provincial and local pandemic experts. The arrangements being put into place, for the protection of staff, clients, caregivers and volunteers, are based on this science. We have put in place:

- mandatory client and caregiver screening and staff self-screening requirements;
- special staff training and refreshers on COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control and the proper use of Personal Protective Equipment;
- heightened rules of practice and processes if we become aware of a client at risk or showing symptoms.

While we may be doing some of our work a little differently these days, what has not changed is our commitment to our mission, to help seniors and adults with disabilities to stay well and continue to live independently in the community. Because we know that many of our clients may feel isolated and vulnerable, we will continue to focus on achieving this goal.

ESS is continuing to provide our services to the level of our Accreditation with Exemplary Standing. This standard of practice, combined with the public health measures we are implementing and the dedication, knowledge and experience of our staff team, will ensure our care continues to be provided well and safely.

ESS is engaged in community mobilization activities to respond to COVID-19.

- In an initiative led by United Way Greater Toronto and the City of Toronto, ESS has been invited to form collaborative partnerships with local agencies serving North and South Etobicoke, to combine forces to meet the needs of more people impacted by this virus.
- ESS is working with local Community Health Centres, to identify those clients on all of our respective rosters, especially those deemed most vulnerable, to organize pick-ups and deliveries (porch-drops) of essential items such as food and medication. These deliveries have already started.

There are a number of updates on ESS activities and COVID-19 resources on our web site at www.esssupportservices.ca. We look forward to hearing if you have any questions or concerns about this information, or other things you would like added.



Alison Coke, CEO
ESS Support Services

cc: ESS Board of Directors



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