UNIVERSAL**care**

October 19, 2022

RE: GET BOOSTED NOW FOR COVID-19

Dear Residents, Families, and Staff:

Thank you for everything you do to keep our home safe and healthy. Getting a COVID-19 booster has been one of the most effective ways to help prevent severe illness and death due to COVID-19.

As per Public Health Ontario's weekly epidemiological summary, we are continuing to see a rise in COVID-19 cases in Ontario; there are a total of 161 and 148 ongoing outbreaks in Long-term Care Homes and Retirement Homes respectively.

The 8th wave of COVID-19 will likely be larger and will come at a time when many other viruses (like flu) will also be circulating at high rates. As we deeply care about your health and the health of our residents, we strongly encourage all residents, essential caregivers, staff, volunteers, and visitors to obtain medical advice and receive your next eligible COVID-19 booster vaccination as soon as possible.

Evidence has shown that protection after a primary COVID-19 vaccine series decreases over time and hence, you will require the COVID-19 vaccine booster dose(s) to help increase protection against symptomatic infection and severe outcomes at the individual level and reduce transmission at the population level. A bivalent Omicron-containing mRNA COVID-19 vaccine is the preferred vaccine product for booster doses as it induces a more robust immune response and is expected to provide improved protection against the Omicron variant and subvariants compared to the original mRNA vaccines.

Health Canada has authorized two bivalent Omicron-containing mRNA COVID-19 vaccines: the Moderna Spikevax BA.1 vaccine and the Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty BA.4/5 vaccine. Residents of Long-Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes are considered high-risk groups and are recommended to receive booster dose(s) now and not wait (if eligible).

Please note: Getting vaccinated now does not mean you will NOT be eligible for a dose later. Once three months have passed, you will likely be eligible for the next dose.

Scheduling Your COVID-19 Vaccines:

There are several ways you can find a vaccine provider:

- Find COVID-19 vaccine locations near you: Search https://covid-19.ontario.ca/book-vaccine/
- Call the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre at 1-833-943-3900
- Eligible individuals can also book an appointment directly through public health units (https://www.phdapps.health.gov.on.ca/phulocator/) using their booking system, participating primary care providers, and paediatricians, as well as at participating pharmacies (https://covid-19.ontario.ca/vaccine-locations) and Indigenous-led vaccination clinics.

We thank you for your ongoing support and contribution to keeping everyone safe. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Please take a look at the Questions and Answers [sheet](#) about COVID-19 vaccines for further assistance.

Please schedule your appointment today!

Thank you,