

May 28, 2020

## **UPDATE**

To the staff, Familyhome providers, individuals we support and their families,

As you are aware, on May 14 the Province of Ontario entered Phase 1 of reopening. We have received many questions on what this means for Bethesda's staff and our operations / service delivery moving forward. We recognize that everyone is anxious to resume services and we appreciate your patience as we navigate what this will look like, while keeping the health and safety of all our first priority.

Since March 16, Bethesda has been providing services virtually and over the phone for the children, youth, adults and families in need of support. While Premier Ford has indicated that certain health and medical services may now resume where proper processes are in place, Bethesda will only move forward once it is safe to do so. Several health and safety strategies will need to be considered and implemented for each service provided, including minimizing contact, physical distancing, handwashing and sanitization, cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and equipment, and use of personal protective equipment prior to any resumption of services. Bethesda's leadership team is compiling a Workplace Resumption Plan that will be in line with legal requirements and local Public Health guidelines and will address plans for children, youth and adult clinical services, facilities and space, human resources, business processes and supply chain management.

As we work toward ensuring that the proper safe guards are in place to protect staff and the individuals we support, it is important that we continue to provide telephone and virtual supports where appropriate and prepare to incorporate some of these remote processes as we look ahead to resuming face-to-face operations.

We've been receiving many questions from staff, Familyhome providers, individuals we support and their families, wondering what the coming months may look like. Below are some of the recurring questions we are receiving:

### **WHAT WILL MY WORK SPACE LOOK LIKE?**

Depending on your role and your work environment, you may notice some changes including physical distancing floor decals, plexiglass barriers, closed common spaces, increased cleaning practices, adapted meeting room usage and the possibility of staggered work schedules. Where possible, and based on departmental needs, some positions within the organization may return to the physical workspace prior to other positions; this will be determined based on the nature and requirements of each position.

### **WHEN WILL FAMILY VISITS RESUME AT RESIDENTIAL LOCATIONS?**

Currently we are not in a position to allow face-to-face family visits within our residential programs until at least June 14. However, we encourage each of you to speak with your Bethesda contact on virtual ways to visit your loved ones. We hope that with physical distancing, appropriate personal

protection equipment and appropriate sanitization practices, we will be able to implement face-to-face visits in the near future. Thank you for your patience regarding visits, we appreciate how difficult this is as we all work together to protect everyone's health and safety.

### **WILL THERE BE SUMMER DAY CAMPS?**

We are actively exploring services and supports that we can safely offer families this summer. Due to the large group sizes involved in camp programs, we have made the difficult decision to cancel our traditional Respite and ABA Summer Day Camps. The team will be reaching out to families to gather feedback on how we can best support children and youth in services that follow Public Health recommendations.

### **VAN RIDES / COMMUNITY OUTINGS**

Residential homes may re-implement recreational van rides provided no interaction with anyone outside of the home takes place. Staff must ensure that there are a safe number of people in their vehicle. Prior to using vehicles, ensure your mask is on securely and not obstructing your view or ability to drive safely. The Residential Leadership team will provide each home with more specifics on how to resume recreational van rides.

### **CLIENT FAMILY PICNIC**

Senior Leadership is looking into a modified version of the Client Family Picnic this year to keep residents and their families safe. The hope is for each home to host their own BBQ allowing up to two (2) guests per individual to attend, should Provincial guidelines permit. Timelines and more information will be provided as service resumption progresses.

Rest assured that as we monitor the progression of the province's reopening, we will move cautiously and explore all avenues to mitigate risk and ensure everyone's safety. We look forward to seeing all of you when the time is right, but in this moment we cannot identify when that will be and therefore are keeping all closures and modifications in place until at least June 14. We will continue to provide regular updates in the coming weeks.

Thank you so much for your patience and understanding. These are exceptional times that are impacting all of us.

For additional questions or concerns, please speak to your Manager or email [questions@bethesdaservices.com](mailto:questions@bethesdaservices.com).

Respectfully,



Brian Davies  
Chief Executive Officer  
Bethesda