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Public Health supports Shelburne?s long-term health care facilities battle COVID-19

Written By MARNI WALSH

Chuck Ferguson, Manager of Communications for Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health told the Free Press this week that his organization has been working closely with both of Shelburne's long term care residences ?on a daily basis in terms of infection control and case management.?

He reports, ?Headwaters Health Care Centre has had 25 staff, including 18 nurses and other health care workers, as well as administration support, working full-time inside the residence for the past few weeks. They will remain in the home until this coming Sunday and are ensuring staff of the Shelburne Residence are trained and equipped to support the residents there.?

An update released by the regional health unit on Wednesday (May 13) included the following statistics for Shelburne's long-term care facilities: Dufferin Oaks has had four residents and 6 staff members test positive for COVID-19, with two individuals passing away. Shelburne Residence Retirement & Nursing Home has been hit particularly hard, with 55 residents and 29 staff testing positive. The facility has recorded three deaths in the past week, bringing the total up to 18.

It is important to note that the retirement home section of the Shelburne Residence has had no cases of COVID-19.

Mr. Ferguson says, ?WDG Public Heath and Headwaters Health Care Centre, as well as local health and social services agencies will continue to support residents and staff in the long-term care portion of the facility.?

Pam Hillock, Dufferin County's Emergency Communications Officer during the Pandemic says, ?The staff at Dufferin Oaks have been tremendously supportive but have definitely been working under very challenging circumstances.?

It is also a challenge for residents ?not see their loved ones,? Ms. Hillock says. ?Virtual visits have been tremendously helpful but is not the same as a personal visit.?

On behalf of the County, the Pam Hillock says, ?We greatly appreciate all the support that has been shown from our community.? Chuck Ferguson advises the best way citizens can support the long-term facilities is to ?follow social distancing and hand hygiene and keep well so health care workers can focus on vulnerable populations.?

For more information visit www.wdgpublichealth.ca and www.headwatershealth.ca for the most up to date information.