



The Saul and Claribel Simkin Centre

1 Falcon Ridge Drive ♦ Winnipeg MB ♦ R3Y 1V9
Phone: (204) 586-9781 ♦ Fax: (204) 589-9033

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Special Update

January 10, 2022

Dear Simkin Families, Staff and the Jewish Community,

The healthcare system and personal care homes have been critically affected by the Omicron variant. We are seeing in this wave that the virus spreads very quickly and has led to staff and Residents testing positive despite being double or triple vaccinated.

During a one week period, the Simkin Centre had more staff test positive than the entire 7 week period of our outbreak in wave 2. Unfortunately, as with wave 2, Shared Health/WRHA were not able to provide staffing assistance at our most critical time of need due to staffing shortages across the healthcare sector. As always, our staff have been amazing and have pulled together going above and beyond every single day. It continues to be one day at a time and our situation can change very quickly. All staff, including the leadership team, is tired. Twenty six of the 29 staff who has tested positive have returned to work as of today. Despite there being a decrease from a 10 to 5 day isolation period for staff positive Covid cases, staff are not always ready to return to work. We are incredibly grateful to have the ongoing support of dedicated volunteers, designated family caregivers and students.

We have reactivated our Covid Isolation Unit for Covid positive Residents that, at this time, is staffed with a Nurse, HCA and Recreation. We are thankful that our staff continues to **volunteer** to work in this space. Twelve hour shifts wearing an N95 mask and full personal protective equipment coupled with the risk of working with Covid positive Residents is no easy feat.

We currently have 2 units where Residents have tested positive for Covid for a total of 11 Residents. All Residents on both of these units remain in quarantine. This is very hard on Residents and increases the workload considerably for staff. Our first Resident who tested positive was discharged from the Covid Isolation Unit today. Please visit our Facebook page if you would like to view a Simkin style recovery parade!

Currently, at least 24 personal care homes in Winnipeg are in a Covid outbreak situation. The media has taken a great deal of interest in what we and other personal care homes are experiencing. Below are the links to interviews that I participated over the last week. I believe that the public needs to know what is happening in the system and I will continue to respond to media requests.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/personal-care-homes-in-winnipeg-hit-by-covid-19-outbreaks-as-case-numbers-continue-to-soar-1.6308199>

<https://thecjn.ca/news/simkin-centre-nursing-home-in-winnipeg-slammed-by-covid-outbreak-among-staff/>

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/special/coronavirus/care-home-residents-go-without-baths-change-of-clothes-576015962.html>

We will continue to be timely, transparent and truthful with our Covid situation at the Simkin Centre. All family updates are posted on our Facebook page and website for any member of the public to see.

If anyone would like to contribute to staff appreciation events please contact Aviva Tabac at aviva.tabac@simkincentre.ca.

If you are interested in volunteering at the Simkin Centre, please contact Alissa Minaker at alissa.minaker@simkincentre.ca. All volunteers are given an orientation including proper use of personal protective equipment.

Sincerely,

Laurie Cerqueti

#simkinstrong #simkincares