



# How Think Research Can Contribute to Your Retirement Community's COVID-19 Response

# Key Highlights

- COVID-19 is present in Canada. Our national and provincial healthcare systems are mobilizing to respond.
- Canada's seniors are at particular risk for contracting COVID-19. The seniors sector has a key role to play in helping prevent outbreaks of the disease and limiting transmission.
- Think Research specializes in implementing up-to-date, evidence-based best practices via standardized clinical tools. We are expanding our existing Clinical Support Tools for the seniors sector to include COVID-19 content.
- Our new COVID-19 clinical content supports consistent early case identification and will be updated as new information emerges on a 72-hour cycle (and sooner if urgent).
- Our content library includes screening and assessment tools, care protocols and orders, and is accompanied by training resources.
- Our team is available to support you through the implementation process as required.

## Problem: Ensuring a Standardized, Evidence-Based Response to COVID-19

With the WHO's formal declaration of COVID-19 as a pandemic, we have entered a very challenging time for you, your staff, residents and their families. Globally, healthcare systems and local infection control and disease management are working hard to protect our most vulnerable people.

The elderly and people with underlying health concerns — such as diabetes, heart disease, or lung disease — are likely at higher risk of developing serious COVID-19 illness.<sup>1</sup>

Given these developments, it is increasingly likely that COVID-19 will affect residents across Ontario's retirement communities. Retirement communities are particularly at risk of outbreaks because of the inherently social, close-knit nature of their living environment (e.g., common areas and shared dining services). COVID-19 transmission is a significant concern for residents who live communally because of their proximity to each other, high incidence of physical contact, and the infection's ability to spread through person-to-person contact.<sup>2</sup>

A systemic, coordinated, evidence-based approach to careful screening, with both active and passive screening and prompt infection control, will help to protect staff, residents and their families.

<sup>1</sup>[Centers for Disease Control & Prevention](#), March 8, 2020.

<sup>2</sup>[Toronto Star](#), March 9, 2020.

## Leveraging Think Research's existing clinical knowledge infrastructure

The [Clinical Support Tools \(CST\) Program](#) in Ontario has empowered more than 440 long-term care homes with digital clinical decision support tools. These tools guide clinicians and frontline staff through a series of evidence-based questions and clinical pathways to develop an informed, person-centred plan of care.

Our new COVID-19 CSTs offer evidence-based clinical screening tools to support you in consistently identifying early cases. New tools being added to the library, in both digital and paper formats, will also support you to quickly identify residents at risk for infection or with concerning symptoms.

Our team can help you to implement policy and procedure development recommendations, allowing you to focus on delivering quality care to your residents and protecting their staff.

You can use these tools to help:

- Minimize the introduction of respiratory illnesses into homes.
- Offer consistent screening and early identification of suspected COVID-19 infections.
- Provide checklists to consolidate key isolation information and manage care for residents with febrile respiratory illness.

We understand the importance of having robust training and education services and tools in place to support uptake of these new tools. We are committed to releasing new COVID-19 content on a 72-hour cycle as updates become available, and even sooner for more urgent updates.

COVID-19 Tool	Description	Used By
Screening Tool for Residents	Series of best practice questions screening for any new COVID-19 symptoms.	Nurses
Screening Tool for Visitors and Volunteers	Series of best practice questions to screen for COVID-19 symptoms, travel or ill contacts.	Nurses, Personal Support Workers, Family Members
Readiness Checklist for Retirement Communities	Checklist to support readiness to effectively manage activities related to COVID-19.	Leadership in retirement communities (e.g., Director of Care)
Isolation Checklist	Checklist of isolation precautions required, recommended personal protective equipment use.	Nurses, Personal Support Workers
Febrile Respiratory Illness Care Protocol	Evidence-based information on diagnostic testing, supportive care, resident education.	Nurses
Febrile Respiratory Illness Physician Orders	Evidence-based orders and guidance for diagnostic, supportive care and interventions.	Physicians

## Timelines for COVID-19 CST Library Content

Think Research will provide our new clinical knowledge tools as follows:

- Paper-based: We are currently reviewing paper-based versions of the tools listed in the table with leading infectious disease experts. We expect their general availability by 9 am on Thursday, March 19, 2020.
- Fillable PDFs: Digital versions of the tools listed above will be available by 9 am on Thursday, March 26, 2020.
- EHR Integrations: We are targeting the week of April 1 for release. We will update you on publication specifics as more information becomes available.

If we can assist in your response to COVID-19 in any way, please contact Alka Modi, Associate Vice President, Client Services, at 1-877-302-1861 ext. 330 or by email at [alka.modi@thinkresearch.com](mailto:alka.modi@thinkresearch.com).