

An Open Letter to Albertans



Our Front-line “Superheroes” Need All Albertans To Be Their Sidekicks

December 8, 2020

This is an open letter to Albertans. Since the initial measures that were implemented back in March at the onset of the pandemic, our front-line workers in seniors housing and care have implemented rigorous measures to keep our most vulnerable safe, in the settings they choose to call home. These workers are not just homecare, health care aides and nursing staff, but also those that provide life enrichment, nutritious meals, housekeeping services, and day-to-day operations of Alberta’s active and lively seniors communities. These teams are the superheroes of the pandemic. They are the ones that are focusing on supporting the social, mental, and health needs of their residents, including preventive measures. These are essential services that “build a protective wall around seniors.”

But the truth of the matter is that these workers have families, lives, and responsibilities outside the places they work. Contrary to misguided comments made on social media and news posts, these workers have made major sacrifices to enhance the safety of their residents, coworkers, and people they live with. While many Albertans have chosen liberties within the scope of the public health orders, many employees in seniors’ communities have chosen to follow stricter enforcement of the recommendations, choosing not to have cohorts, cancelling family gatherings, keeping their children at home to do online learning, ordering essential services online...and so much more. Part time staff working multiple jobs to make ends meet are now working one job at single sites, to reduce exposure risks and potential spread, even if this has meant less earning potential for their households.

Despite the self-imposed measures employees have taken, there are still unintended risks. COVID-19 is the unseen threat in public places. It can wander down aisles and hallways undetected, with carriers being asymptomatic for days before it makes its presence known. It takes advantage of those standing in line ups with their masks beneath their nose or chin. The virus sneaks onto the hands of well-meaning individuals during a hand-off of purchased items before those hands can be sanitized or washed. This is not an attempt to fear monger – it is the reality of this virus, and a reminder as to how quickly it can spread.

Those that are battling the virus will tell you this is not like the flu or common cold. A loved one can be asymptomatic on a Friday, hospitalized on Saturday, and taking their last breath on Sunday. Many that have “recovered” still experience difficulties weeks and months later from heart issues, to cognition and memory function challenges, to unexplained panic attacks and neurological issues, and loss of taste and smell. Some have coughs and respiratory problems that linger long after they “beat” COVID-19.

There is a shadowed villain in our community, Alberta. And while our front-line superheroes are rising to the challenge, they cannot suppress the threat it poses to our most vulnerable citizens without your help. We need everyone to pull up their mask right now – or all the sacrifices and isolation measures made to date will be for nought. We need you to be our sidekicks in our efforts right now.



9711-47 Ave, Edmonton, AB T6E 5M7
Phone: 780.439.6473 Fax: 780.433.3717
Email: ascha@ascha.com Web: www.ascha.com



Our residents and employees are as tired as you are. The employees are awaiting the province to announce how federal money will finally be released to support them in their herculean efforts. They are waiting for everything done over the past nine months to make sense. We know that there are those out there that are averse to all the measures and we understand that mental health is just as important as physical health. Our seniors, who have withstood some of the strictest isolation measures, know about the importance of balanced approaches and protections of freedoms all too well. But the measures will not stop until we can get our active case numbers down – and that will not happen if we continue being defiant and finding loopholes to satisfy our own wishes.

We all need to be better – and we truly are in this together. Stay at home, and if you absolutely **MUST** go out, mask up, use proper hand hygiene, follow the advice of health experts – we must control the spread! Our most vulnerable Albertans, and the people that care for them, are depending on you! Let's give our most vulnerable a chance to live well and embrace their loved ones once again.

