

June 7, 2019

To: Patients and residents evacuated from Fort Vermilion and La Crete on June 1-2, 2019  
cc: Families of the evacuated patients & residents

Due to potential threat of wildfires in the area, Alberta Health Services (AHS) evacuated acute patients and continuing care residents from La Crete and Fort Vermilion, on June 1-2, 2019.

There were 77 patients/residents safely relocated to health facilities in Edmonton, Grande Prairie, Peace River, Lacombe, Lamont, Wetaskiwin, Leduc, Tofield and Sherwood Park.

Given the complexity of a number of patients and residents, to ensure safe and timely transport, AHS completed the evacuation in collaboration with our municipal partners.

As the evacuation alert for Fort Vermilion and La Crete has now been officially lifted, we are preparing to have our continuing care residents who were evacuated from the communities return home.

Continuing care residents from High Level who were evacuated to La Crete and Fort Vermilion on May 20, 2019 will not return to those communities. They will remain at their current temporary location and will be returned directly to High Level when the wildfire evacuation alert for that community has been lifted.

Those residents of Heimstaed Lodge in La Crete who remained in the community with family during the evacuation alert period are now able to return to the lodge. Residents and their families will be notified by staff of Heimstaed Lodge.

The care and safety of our residents remains our top priority. We are ready to accept residents back to our facilities in La Crete and Fort Vermilion and are preparing a transportation plan to ensure everything is in place for a seamless and safe return of residents.

It is important to consider the impact of these moves on any vulnerable population. To help alleviate any additional stress on our patients and residents, we are planning a staged return to our facilities in La Crete and Fort Vermilion.

Plans are in place to begin this process the week of June 10-14, 2019.

To ensure the comfort and safety of the residents, they will continue to be cared for in their temporary placements until it is time for them to be transported home.

Residents, families and the health facilities where our residents have been relocated will be notified when arrangements are in place for residents to return to La Crete and Fort Vermilion.

Our priority is to bring our residents home as quickly and safely as possible, but it will take a few days depending on each individual's care needs and modes of transportation.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work toward having everyone returned home safely and with as little stress and disruption as possible.

Families of the evacuees are encouraged to reach out to the facility where the evacuees were placed, and to maintain contact with their loved ones. Any patients, residents, or families with questions can also reach out to Patient Relations at 780-296-0738 between 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. throughout the week and weekend.

Updates to AHS' response to the wildfires, as well as resources, will continue to be posted to [www.ahs.ca/wildfire](http://www.ahs.ca/wildfire).

We thank the AHS staff & physicians who assisted in this safe evacuation, and who continue to provide safe & high quality care to patients & families.

Greg Cummings  
Chief Zone Officer, North Zone