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Providing Specialized Nursing  
& Advanced Pulmonary Care

### **Weekly Family-Guardian Communication**

**...from the Interdisciplinary Care Team – 5/28/2021**

In our effort to maintain open and honest communication, we will continue to provide you with updates about all Respiratory Viral Outbreaks and the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). We hope you find this information helpful.

#### **Resident Update**

Our Residents are well, in their typical state of health.

#### **Staff Update**

One Staff Member has tested positive for COVID-19 via community testing. All Resident Family-Guardians were contacted directly by Nursing if their child was affected by this.

#### **Resident/Staff COVID-19 Testing**

Following The NJ Department of Health (DOH) guidance, weekly Resident outbreak testing continues due to our positive cases. Routine Staff testing continues one time per week since there is a steady decrease in the rate of the virus in the community. This will continue until further direction from The NJ DOH. We remain in an outbreak monitoring status with The NJ DOH.

#### **Visitation**

Compassionate Care Indoor and Outdoor Family visitation is available by appointment. A Monthly Calendar of the schedule is provided to our Families. All visitation is Staff supported as we are required to monitor and maintain infection control standards. Video Visitation is also available via Skype, Zoom or FaceTime. Please contact your VPF Social Worker for more information and to schedule an appointment. We continue to carefully review all guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Center for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) and The NJ DOH working toward a safe reopening for all of our Residents-Families as well our Staff Members. The challenge for VPF is that 50% of our pediatric Residents are under the age of 12 and not eligible to be vaccinated at this time. Most of the newer guidance is about vaccination of Residents and Staff and permitted activities. When Residents are fully vaccinated they may have more opportunity and freedom to participate in a variety of unrestricted events, activities. We highly encourage our Families to consider vaccination for all Residents Age 12 and older. (Continued over)

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### **Phased Reopening of Long Term Care Facilities**

Following the NJ State reopening plan and all of the guidance recommendations from CDC and CMS, The NJ DOH is revising Executive Directive No. 20-026 that established mandatory procedures in order for us to safely reopen to **ALL** visitors and resume normal operations. We continue to comply with this Directive and all appropriate guidance and will communicate to our Family-Guardians any change.

### **COVID-19 Vaccine**

The Pfizer-BioNTech Vaccine has been authorized for teens 12-15 years old. This is the vaccine we have previously partnered with Walgreens to administer to our Residents and Staff. We are contacting our Family-Guardians of our Residents in this age group to discuss administering the vaccine. We will also continue to offer the vaccine to all of our eligible Residents age 12 and older. We are happy to report that 70% of our Staff are vaccinated and 32 of our Residents (Age 17 and older) are vaccinated at this time.

**Although the vaccine is not mandatory to receive, it is highly recommended for all individuals to prevent the spread of COVID-19.**

The vaccine is readily available at various sites in the community for all NJ Residents. A NJ State toll free Hotline can be contacted at 855-568-0545 to assist you with general questions about the vaccines, eligibility and location of vaccination sites or you can visit the NJ Hub Website: [covid19.nj.gov](https://covid19.nj.gov). We highly encourage all of our Staff, Residents and Family-Guardians to receive the vaccine. If you or any of your family members that visit VPF have received the vaccine, please provide a copy of your vaccine card to your VPF Social Worker for our records.

### **Our Commitment**

Resident and Staff wellness and safety is our top priority. Please be reassured we continue to follow all core standards of Infection Prevention and Control measures partnering with the NJ DOH to maintain wellness. Our commitment is verified again during another unannounced visit, an Infection Prevention and Control focused Survey on 11/13 by the NJ DOH. We are happy to report that we are in full compliance with all of the federal and state rules, guidelines and standards of care specific to Infection Prevention and Control.

### **Our Appreciation**

The strength and courage our Family-Guardians continue to demonstrate as we all work through this pandemic is heroic. A heartfelt thank you for your continued patience, support and trust in us. We respect and appreciate our partnership with you.

### **Important Reminder**

We encourage our Family-Guardians to receive a yearly flu vaccine to help keep us all well especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is not too late! The State of NJ requires all individuals employed in any NJ Healthcare Facility receive a yearly flu vaccine unless they have a medical exemption from a healthcare provider. All of our eligible Staff and Residents have received the flu vaccine.

### **Important Communication Update**

We are happy to let you know we have an automated Family-Guardian notification system in place that is linked to our Electronic Medical Record. You will receive all urgent messages from the automated system just as you receive now by text or voice to your cell phone or landline that is sent by Administration. In the near future, other notifications we typically mail including this Weekly Update will be sent by email if there is an available email address. We will continue to mail information for those without email addresses.

Be well.