



1304 Laurel Oak Rd
Voorhees, NJ 08043

P: 856.346.3300

F: 856.435.4223

Providing Specialized Nursing
& Advanced Pulmonary Care

Weekly Family-Guardian Communication

...from the Interdisciplinary Care Team – 6/11/2021

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

One of our Residents tested positive for COVID-19 via our weekly outbreak testing. The Resident was transferred to the hospital for close monitoring as part of our Outbreak Plan. The Resident remains well not having any signs or symptoms of illness. The source of exposure cannot be determined at this time.

Staff Update

Our Staff are well.

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. This will continue until further direction from The NJ DOH as we remain in an outbreak monitoring status. The rate of community transmission in our area remains moderate or in the “yellow zone” but continues to decrease showing signs we are emerging from the COVID-19 crisis.

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. The NJ State Government recently lifted "The State of Emergency" declared last March at the start of the pandemic but Executive Directives issued remain in effect for all NJ Long Term Care Facilities until further notice. This is necessary to continue to protect and promote the safety and wellness of all individuals residing in long term care facilities.

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. 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 that will help us plan for safe visitation.

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

A heartfelt thank you for your continued patience, support and trust in us. We respect and appreciate our partnership with you.

Important FLU 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.

We have attached an important update from Jim Konzelman our Director of Nursing concerning changes within our Nursing Department.