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Providing Specialized Nursing  
& Advanced Pulmonary Care

### Weekly Resident Family-Guardian Communication

...from the Interdisciplinary Care Team 2/23/2024

*In an effort to maintain open and honest communication, we will continue to provide updates about all respiratory viral outbreaks. We hope you find this information helpful.*

#### **COVID-19 Update:**

##### **Residents**

One Resident has tested positive for COVID-19, is stable and in isolation. Nursing has contacted our Resident Family-Guardians if their child was effected by this. Our Residents previously testing positive for COVID-19 have fully recovered.

##### **Staff**

Four of our Staff Members have tested positive for COVID-19 and home on isolation. Nursing has contacted all Resident Family-Guardians if their child was effected by this. We have a total of four Staff home recovering. Our COVID-19 outbreak continues.

##### **Outbreak Update**

Since our COVID-19 Outbreak continues, until further notice, a clean well-fitting surgical mask covering the nose and mouth is required by all Visitors and Staff at all times while on campus. The only exception is in the Café during meal time. This is a precautionary measure due to the increase of COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses circulating in the community. Visitors to our campus have a high risk of exposure to the highly transmissible viruses even though may be vaccinated, wear a mask, maintain social distancing and have proper hand hygiene. Visitors will need to monitor themselves for 10 days after the visit for any signs or symptoms of illness. When there are no new reported cases of COVID-19 for 28 days this outbreak will be declared over. Be reassured we continue to follow all necessary prevention and control measures.

##### **Group A Strep Update:**

We have four Staff Members and three Residents diagnosed with the Group A Strep Infection “Strep Throat”. This is a type of bacteria commonly found on the skin, throat and in the nose. Most infections are easily treated with antibiotics. The symptoms may include sore throat and pain when swallowing, fever, skin rash or red, itchy sores and swollen lymph nodes. It is spread through contact with bodily fluids, wounds or sores of infected people. The best ways to protect yourself from getting sick are proper hand washing, covering mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing, regular cleaning and sanitizing personal items like toothbrushes, staying home when ill and treating and covering open wounds and sores. The NJ Department of Health has declared this an outbreak. Nursing has notified all Resident Family-Guardians effected by this.

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

We continue with a “contact tracing” testing approach for Residents and Staff if they have had a high risk exposure to COVID-19 regardless of vaccination status. COVID-19 testing continues to be offered to all of our Family-Guardians and Community Care Partners at check-up but is not mandatory. All other visitors are required by The NJ DOH to be tested upon check-in.

continued over

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### **Visitation**

We have open access visitation taking place in our Resident's room limited to two visitors at a time due to space limitations. We must continue to follow Federal and State Regulations requiring best practice of infection prevention and control. Our Families trained by Staff to care for their child without Staff supervision may visit with their child in our Family Room, Serenity Garden or Playground. Surgical masks are available at check-in and we offer rapid COVID-19 testing prior to visitation. All visitors are required to complete a health screening and temperature check at sign-in. We kindly request if you are not feeling well, have COVID-19 or have been exposed by a close personal contact with COVID-19 or to any illness to please delay your visit. It is best to check in at the Nursing Station prior to entering a Resident's room for the latest update. We also offer video visitation for our Families upon request. Please contact Social Work or a Nursing Supervisor for more information.

### **COVID-19 Vaccine**

To best protect our Residents, we continue to offer the COVID-19 vaccine series to all of our eligible Residents age 6 months and older and administer the vaccine with Family-Guardian permission. The vaccines are safe and highly effective and work to prevent the spread of the virus, severe illness, hospitalizations and death. We highly recommend and encourage our Residents and Families to receive the vaccine series. The vaccines are 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: covid-19.nj.gov](https://www.nj.gov/health/hudrhc/covid-19/).

### **Pandemic Federal and State Emergency Declarations**

President Biden officially declared the Federal State of Emergency over as of April 11 and the Federal Public Health State of Emergency over on May 11. Although NJ Governor Murphy had declared the NJ State of Emergency and Public Health State of Emergency over in March 2023, Executive Directive 21-012 implemented by The NJ DOH during the pandemic remains in effect for all NJ DOH licensed NJ Long Term Care Facilities at this time.

### **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 team has works tirelessly to remain up to date on all current COVID-19 data and recommendations from science and medical experts to make the best decisions for our Residents, Families, Staff and Community.

### **Our Appreciation**

A heartfelt thank you to our Residents, Family-Guardians and Community Care Partners for their continued patience, support and trust in us. We are thankful for our partnership to help keep us in the best of health.

### **Important Communication Updates**

Our automated Family-Guardian notification system is in place that is linked to our Electronic Medical Record. We are sending all medical appointments, facility outings and urgent messages including updates about COVID-19 from our automated system to Family-Guardian cell phones or landlines. Other notifications we typically mail may be sent by email if you have an email address. We will continue to mail information for those without an email address. We will continue to mail all Resident Family-Guardians important updates as needed. Our Weekly COVID-19 Update is available on our website for review.

### **FLU VACCINE**

We encourage our Residents and Family-Guardians to receive a yearly flu vaccine to help keep us well. We provide the vaccine to all of our Residents with Family-Guardian permission. 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. We offer and provide the vaccine to all of our eligible Staff.

**Be well.**