



Department of Health

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Governor

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Commissioner

SALLY DRESLIN, M.S., R.N.
Executive Deputy Commissioner

March 26, 2020

Coronavirus COVID-19 Update

Dear Resident/Representative:

We continue to take action to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus, COVID-19. We continue to screen employees prior to allowing them to work and more often if they work more than 8 hours at a time. This screening process involves employees stopping at the entrance and answering questions about their health while having their temperature taken. If there are any issues, they are being referred to their community medical provider and, if necessary, we contact the local health department. No staff have been diagnosed with the virus at this time.

We are monitoring residents at least every shift, taking temperatures and doing other assessments, as needed for respiratory symptoms that might indicate COVID-19. We have identified two residents with symptoms, and we worked with the local health department to determine that they should be tested for COVID-19. Fortunately, the test results came back negative. Whenever a resident shows these symptoms, we will notify the resident's representative, as directed by the resident, and review the situation and explain what will be done. The resident will be placed in their room until the results come back, but we will have staff assigned to visit with them often every day to provide companionship.

Visitors are still not allowed to enter the Home unless these are end-of-life visits (and without a health risk to the visitor). In the meantime, we have increased the number of iPads through donations and the generosity of our Board of Visitors, so our Recreation Therapy staff and Social Workers are able to help set up video chatting for our residents. Please call us and let us know if you are interested in using this service.

You have probably been hearing in the news that health care providers do not have enough Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to protect staff from catching the virus and spreading it. Fortunately, we have enough disposable facemasks for all employees to use for about 3 weeks. We also have a sufficient supply of N95 masks, face shields and gowns at this time. We may need to switch to washable facemasks if the need arises. We have had a wonderful outpouring of calls asking what people can do to help us, so we are including directions on how to make these masks. They can be dropped off at our front entrance, and we may share them with other healthcare providers who have a greater need at this time. More information about this has been placed on our Facebook page.

We are also creating an email listserv to provide regular information on what is happening here. If you would like to participate in this, please contact your Social Worker or RT staff. We will need your email address to do this.

Our staff remain committed to doing all we can to continue to keep our residents safe now and always. If there is anything you need, please let us know.

Sincerely,

Kurt D. Apthorpe, MBA, CNHA, LNHA
Administrator