



Department of Health

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April 2, 2020

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

Dear Resident/Representative,

We continue to take active steps to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Fortunately, we have not had any positive cases and no residents have required testing for the virus since my last letter to you.

We have received several face mask donations. Thank you! Information about these masks is located on our Facebook page: New York State Veterans' Home, Oxford.

The Volunteer Guild was gracious enough to let us open the Gift Shop and provide free snacks to residents. We are so fortunate to have a supportive Guild and Volunteer group! Even though they are not allowed to visit and help us at this time, they are here in spirit and through the goodwill they are spreading by this kind act.

We are talking with the other State Veterans Homes who are currently dealing with this virus and using their experiences to improve our preventive measures. Current government guidance directs us to assume that any resident with identified symptoms is infected, so we have a plan for how we will manage this. We are one of the few facilities in the area with a negative pressure room to help prevent airborne transmission of the virus. If necessary, a resident may be moved to the negative pressure room. If that is not available, the resident will be isolated in their room for a 14-day period. If a resident goes to the hospital, we are assuming they have been exposed to the virus and will require isolation in their room for a 14-day period upon return to the Veterans Home. Whenever a resident is isolated, we will make sure they are checked on regularly throughout each shift and provided with socialization by staff whenever possible.

The staff continue to assist residents in the use of the Home's iPads for video chatting. We recommend that families also send short videos which will be reassuring to your loved one. A simulated presence is a valuable gift. This involves playing an individualized video or audio recording of family members and friends. This can be especially comforting for residents who have been used to a lot of visitors prior to this outbreak, and it is also beneficial to residents with dementia. We would be happy to help get these messages to your loved ones with the use of the Home's iPads.

If you have any questions, please let us know. We are grateful to be of service to our residents, and to you during this unprecedented outbreak.

Sincerely,

Kurt D. Apthorpe, MBA, CHNA, LNHA
Administrator
New York State Veterans Home at Oxford