



August 11, 2021

Dear Residents, Families and Friends,

On August 4, 2021, the Department of Public Health issued new guidelines to nursing homes regarding testing and visitations. This is in light of the emergence of the COVID-19 variant. You probably have read or heard in the news concerning these updates. I would first like to bring you up to date on employee vaccinations.

All staff must be fully vaccinated (definition of "fully vaccinated" means 2 weeks after you receive your 2nd dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine or after your one dose of the J&J) vaccine by October 10, 2021. The first dose of the vaccine must be given by September 1st. There are certain exemptions for medical or religious reasons.

Residents, families, and friends are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated for their safety and those of their loved ones, friends, and our staff members. The vaccines are safe. To date, we have vaccinated about 250 individuals, both residents and staff. A few had minor side effects such as soreness at the vaccination site and headache and fatigue. For the greatest percentage, these stopped the very next day.

Visitors are encouraged to visit with their loved ones outside of the center or virtually. But, if visits do occur indoors, the resident and visitor (no more than 2 visitors per resident bedroom) must be fully vaccinated and the roommate must be fully vaccinated. Masks must stay on all parties during the duration of the indoor visits. Once again, social distancing must be practiced and there should be no physical contact between each person.

Folks are reminded that if the resident, or their visitor, is not fully vaccinated, the visit **MUST** be scheduled by calling Lindsey Emde and **MUST** occur in a designated space as determined by the nursing center.

Indoor dining and group activities may occur if all residents participating are fully vaccinated – at which point, face masks will not be required for the residents. If even one resident is not fully vaccinated and wishing to participate in a group activity, all participants must wear a face mask. Unvaccinated residents may not participate in communal dining.

If a resident or staff member, living or working on a particular floor, tests positive, there will be no in-room visits for that particular floor until no one else tests positive for a period of 14 days. Testing during this time will be in accordance with DPH and CDC guidelines.

A resident who is suspected or confirmed to be infected with COVID-19 cannot participate in a visitation unless for a compassionate care visit. These are approved on a case-by-case basis.

This emergence of this variant was not fully expected to take hold, especially with this speed. We ask for your understanding of the situation and look forward to your help with complying with these guidelines.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Diminico, Administrator