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Providing Specialized Nursing
& Advanced Pulmonary Care

Weekly Family-Guardian Communication

...from the Interdisciplinary Care Team 11/25/2022

In our effort to maintain open and honest communication, we will continue to provide updates about all Respiratory Viral Outbreaks and the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). We hope you find this information helpful.

Resident Update

We have had a few additional confirmed cases of Residents with Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) this week. Nursing has contacted our Family-Guardians directly if their child was effected by this. Our Residents previously testing positive continue to recover. RSV is a common cause of respiratory illness among individuals in all age groups. Infection usually causes cold symptoms, but often in infants and younger children, RSV infection spreads to the lungs and may lead to bronchiolitis (inflammation of the small airways in the lungs) and pneumonia. Almost all children are infected at least once with RSV by 2 years of age, and reinfection during life is common. Children and infants who are infected often have a runny nose and a decrease in appetite before any other symptoms appear. A cough usually develops 1 to 3 days later. Soon after the cough develops, sneezing, fever and wheezing can occur. In very young infants, decreased activity, poor feeding, irritability and breathing problems might be the only symptoms. Most infants and children recover from RSV in 1 to 2 weeks. A very small percentage of children require hospitalization. Adults usually recover from RSV in less than 5 days. Children with weakened immune systems, prematurity, or heart or lung problems have greater difficulty when ill with this infection. RSV is highly contagious and can be spread when droplets containing the virus are sneezed or coughed into the air. RSV can live on inanimate objects (such as cribs, door knobs or table tops) for many hours. Infection can be easily spread when a person gets the virus on their hands while touching a contaminated object, then touches their eyes, nose or mouth. Symptoms appear in 2 to 8 days (but usually 4 to 6 days) after a child is exposed to the virus. A person with RSV can spread the infection for 3 to 8 days or the duration of the illness. In some cases, the virus can shed for up to 3 to 4 weeks. The best ways to prevent the spread of this virus includes frequent hand washing, cleaning and disinfecting all surfaces, covering your mouth and nose when cough and sneeze, avoid touching your face and staying home when sick. Please be reassured we are in contact with the NJ Department of Health and taking all necessary steps to control the spread of the virus. An outbreak of RSV has been declared.

Staff Update

One Staff member has tested positive for COVID-19 and is home on quarantine. There was no exposure to any Resident or Staff member. We remain in a COVID-19 outbreak.

Resident/Staff COVID-19 Testing

Recently The Center for Disease Control (CDC) and The NJ Department of Health (DOH) have updated Testing Guidance and Directives. Routine testing is no longer required for Staff considered by CDC Guidelines not up to date with COVID-19 vaccine boosters. Staff is only required to have the primary series of the COVID-19 vaccine and one booster. 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.

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Visitation

We have returned to open access in room visitation for all Resident Family-Guardians. Appointments are not needed and visits take place in the Resident's Room following strict infection prevention and control practices. Our Visitation Guidelines are available at Front Desk Reception. We offer rapid COVID-19 testing prior to visitation and ask if you are not feeling well or have been exposed to COVID-19 to please delay your visit. It is best to check in at the Nursing Station prior to entering your child'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

Recently The Federal Drug Administration (FDA) issued Emergency Use Authorizations (EAU) for COVID-19 Bivalent Booster vaccines as recommended by The CDC for everyone 5 years of age and older. This booster targets the Omicron variant. We continue to contact our Resident's Family-Guardians to discuss administering this booster vaccine. We offer the COVID-19 vaccine series to all eligible Residents age 6 months and older and provide the vaccine with Family-Guardian permission. **Although the vaccine is not mandatory to receive for our Residents and Family-Guardians, 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: covid-19.nj.gov](https://www.nj.gov/health/hudat/covid-19/). **We highly encourage ALL to receive the vaccine and recommended boosters!** It is mandatory for all eligible NJ Health Care Workers to receive a COVID-19 vaccine and first booster series.

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. Throughout the pandemic, our team has worked 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 throughout this pandemic.

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 SEASON IS HERE!

We encourage our Residents and Family-Guardians to receive a yearly flu vaccine to help keep us well especially during the COVID-19 PANDEMIC. We are currently contacting our Family-Guardians to discuss giving the flu vaccine to their child. 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 will provide the vaccine to all eligible Staff and to our Residents with Family-Guardian permission.

BE WELL!