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Providing Specialized Nursing  
& Advanced Pulmonary Care

## **Weekly Family-Guardian Communication**

**...from the Interdisciplinary Care Team – 1/15/2021**

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

### **Resident Update**

All of our Residents remain in their typical state of health. No additional Residents have been diagnosed with the Rhino-Enteroviruses although we remain in a declared outbreak status determined by the NJ Department of Health (DOH).

### **Staff Update**

We have 10 Staff Members that have tested positive for COVID-19 since our last update. The direct caregivers that tested positive were not showing any signs or symptoms of illness while caring for our Residents. Nursing contacted all Family-Guardians by phone if their child was cared for by our Staff that tested positive.

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

Following The NJ DOH guidance, we continue to test our Residents weekly and testing all of our Staff two times per week. This is required due to the high community positivity rate of COVID-19 for our area which is over 10% and the number of our positive cases. We remain in an outbreak status as declared by the NJ DOH. This will continue until further notice.

### **Visitation**

Since we have positive cases of COVID-19, Family-Guardian indoor visitation per NJ DOH Executive Directive 20-025 specific to Pediatric and Residents of Adult Long Term Care Facilities with Developmental Disabilities is delayed. We must be COVID-19 free and no longer conducting outbreak testing (details explained in Phased Reopening section). Concerning Outdoor Visitation, due to the cold weather, season change we are no longer scheduling this visitation. Video Visitation continues to be available via Skype, Zoom or FaceTime. We encourage you to contact your VPF Social Worker to help arrange this.

### **Continued over**

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### **Phased Reopening**

The NJ DOH recently revised Executive Directive No. 20-026, which establishes mandatory procedures that Long Term Care facilities must meet in order to safely reopen to ALL visitors and resume normal operations. The phased reopening follows the NJ State Reopening Plan and is based on the following criteria: the rate of community transmission of COVID-19, a Facility's outbreak status and ability to test Staff and Residents as well as maintain Core Infection Prevention and Control Practices, have appropriate Staffing and Personnel Protective Equipment (PPE). When facilities are COVID-19 free for 14 days AND no longer conducting outbreak testing, they may restore services in phases, starting with indoor visitation for Resident Family-Guardians. Strict guidelines must be followed in all phases outlined in the Executive Directive to ensure a safe reopening. Since we have positive cases of COVID-19 and are conducting outbreak testing, Family/Guardian indoor visitation is delayed until further notice. A limited, special circumstance indoor visitation defined as "Compassionate Care Visitation" is also included in this Directive following strict guidelines during all phases of a Facility's reopening. For VPF, indoor visitation will be considered for newly admitted Residents and Residents and their Family-Guardians experiencing extreme emotional distress. Our Medical Staff, Director of Nursing, Nurse Managers/Supervisors and Social Workers coordinate this specialized visitation scheduled by appointment only on a limited basis. Indoor visitation for End of Life Care is an exception in this Directive and will be supported as needed at any time. Please contact your VPF Social Worker for more information. As a friendly reminder, Family-Guardians can now launder their child's clothing and linens. Please contact your VPF Social Worker or Nursing Supervisor if interested.

### **COVID-19 Vaccine**

We hosted our first Vaccine Clinic onsite January 13 partnering with Walgreens Pharmacy with great success! The first dose of the Pfizer vaccine was administered to our Residents age 16 and older with parent/guardian permission and our Staff. Our second clinic will be held on February 3. Please contact your VPF Social Worker if you would like your child age 16 and older to have the vaccine during our second clinic. The vaccine is now available in the community. Please visit the NJ State Website for more information: [covid19.nj.gov](https://www.nj.gov/covid19).

### **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 commitment is verified again during another unannounced visit, an Infection Prevention and Control focused Survey on 11/13 by the NJ DOH. We are happy to report that we are in full compliance with all of the federal and state rules, guidelines and standards of care specific to Infection Prevention and Control.

### **Our Appreciation**

The strength and courage our Family-Guardians continue to demonstrate as we all work through this pandemic is heroic. A heartfelt thank you for your continued patience, support and trust in us.

### **Important Reminder: Flu Season**

We encourage our Family-Guardians to receive a yearly flu vaccine to help keep us all well especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. 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 are in the process of providing the vaccine to our Staff. All of our Residents with Family-Guardian permission have received the flu vaccine.

Be well.

\*\*\*\*\*We have attached a letter for you from the newest member of our team, Dr. Jeffrey Petrozzino, MD PhD