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Providing Specialized Nursing
& Advanced Pulmonary Care

Weekly Family-Guardian Communication

...from the Interdisciplinary Care Team – 12/31/20

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

We have one Resident, who was in isolation that has tested positive for COVID-19 via our weekly testing. The Resident did not have any signs or symptoms of illness and as a precaution was transferred to a Hospital for close monitoring. All other Residents remain well.

Staff Update

We have two Staff Members, direct caregivers, that tested positive for COVID-19 this week via our twice a week testing and were not having any signs or symptoms of illness. Nursing contacted all Family-Guardians by phone if their child was cared for by our caregivers that tested positive. Five Staff Members remain home on quarantine.

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%. We remain in an outbreak status declared by the NJ DOH due to our positive cases. This will continue until further notice. We are also participating in a pilot program required by NJ DOH mandating testing of our Staff via rapid testing three times per week.

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). In the meantime, Outdoor Visitation continues, weather permitting. Due to day light saving time and season changes, we have relocated outdoor visitation to the Courtyard of the Bancroft School and Medical Day Center located at the back of our building. We have a tent with heaters and additional lighting. Due to the cold weather, we will no longer offer outdoor visitation after 3 pm. Please contact your Child's Social Worker or Nursing Supervisor to arrange a visit. 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 are partnering with Walgreens Pharmacy and providing vaccination clinics at VPF for Staff and Residents age 16 years and older for the FDA approved Pfizer vaccine. We are in the process of contacting all Family-Guardians of our eligible Residents to discuss and obtain consent for the vaccine. Detailed information was mailed to our eligible Resident Family-Guardians for review. Our first Clinic is scheduled for Wednesday January 13.

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.

We send you and your family our warmest thoughts and best wishes this Holiday season and look forward to a healthy and joyful New Year! We have enclosed updated information from the NJ DOH that we hope you find helpful for you and your Family.

Be well.