

August 24, 2020

Hello everyone,



This email is to inform you that we were notified today that a staff member tested positive for COVID-19. This person was a Per Diem LNA that worked a few shifts on the 2nd floor and one shift on the 3rd floor; she last worked on the 2nd floor on 8/23 and on the 3rd floor on 8/17. Because of this we have canceled all visits for the 2nd floor residents until Tuesday September 8th and 3rd floor residents until August 31st. Visits will continue for residents on our 4th floor. We have been in contact with the Long-Term Care testing unit and are awaiting dates for testing of residents and staff.

The following is currently in place:

- All staff are wearing gowns, gloves, mask, N95, or KN95 mask, face shield, and gloves for protection of the residents and the spread of COVID on 2nd floor and select residents on the 3rd floor.
- The 2nd floor is currently closed.
- All residents on the 2nd and 3rd floors will remain on their respective floors.
- Only staff working on the 2nd floor will be allowed; no crossover to other floors.
- All residents on 2nd and 3rd floors are being encouraged to stay apart and in their rooms. On the 3rd floor we are doing our best to practice social distancing but as you can imagine this is a bit difficult on this particular floor for a handful of the residents.
- Both dietary and environmental services have revised their procedures to better accommodate the restrictions put on these floors. They too are wearing appropriate PPE as necessary.
- All staff continues to be screened before entering the facility.

General news update:

This letter is usually sent out on Friday's however I was off last Friday.

Due to a concerning email I received from a family member, (I also receive many positive emails), I would like to address resident visits. First and foremost, I want all of you to know how much we care about your loved one entrusted in our care. As caregivers we are deeply saddened how COVID-19 has affected our operations but mostly the lives of the residents as-well-as the staff. Since March we have been constantly monitoring residents for changes in condition and their psychosocial wellbeing that may have been impacted due to the extreme change to their daily routine.

Barbara spends most all of her time setting up family visits which requires several calls back and forth to all who are planning to visit. In addition, it takes an additional staff member to check

visitors in and then monitor the visit (per guidelines). We are doing about 50 visits per week or one per resident within a two-week time frame.

Last week I said that Mt. Carmel will not be moving forward with the inside visits, but we will continue with the outdoor and window visits already in place. There were a few reasons for this decision. First each resident would have to choose the **one** family member they would like to have visit them. No other family members would be allowed into the facility to visit (per the guidelines) nor could you take turns with another family member. If we did the inside visits, they would be in a room closest to the outside door(s) and the same process/procedures for our outside visits would still be in effect. Due to staffing we can only do either inside/outside or window visits or a combination of all but not all at the same time. We felt that most families would prefer to have multiple visitors, (more than one than one at a time), some bring pets and children (for window visits) and to not be able to offer them in place of inside visits would cause more issues amongst family members.

As an FYI there are no facilities that I am aware of that is offering inside visits. I believe there is a greater chance of a visitor bringing COVID into the facility. Although we are screening visitors and staff there is no guarantee that this stops COVID from entering the facility (a good example of this was outlined above). I cannot imagine that any of you would want for us to lower our safety standards if it came with a greater risk of your loved one getting COVID. Please be advised that our visitation process will change in some way as the weather begins to change.

An update on the hairdresser: I reached out to our hairdresser and she has decided to not return. She has not been here since March and said she needed to work. She took a job at an assisted living center in Concord. We are in the process of looking for another; if you know of anyone please let them know. I think we may hire someone this time instead of using a vendor. This way they could stay working as an employee and not be kept out due to CMS regulations. I hope you all understand that we must follow the guidelines put in place by the state and CMS, we do not get a choice. We want what's best for the residents as much as you and it truly saddens us that we cannot get back fast enough to some sort of "normal" (pre-COVID).

Outside Visits: They continue to be in high demand, due to this, we are trying to be fair and ask that families schedule for every other week (so all 100 residents can get a visit). We are also asking families to call a week ahead of your planned visit. Please understand that it is very difficult to schedule on short notice, such as the next day or on a Friday prior to the weekend coming up. Also, window visits are still available, especially if you have a large family, or you want to bring kids and/or pets.

Our focus is and has been getting residents and families together, and we look forward to scheduling these very important visits for you. Barbara's phone number is 935-4607 and her email is mtc.activitydir@nh-cc.org. If you would like a Google Duo visit for any resident please call any one of the floors directly to set one up.

Sincerely,
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