

April 30, 2021

Hi Everyone,

Everything continues to be going well; no positives, residents enjoying daily activities, and family visits are still going well. We did receive some new guidance from CMS on Wednesday, I will cover them **below**.

Positivity Rates:

The New Hampshire map still has counities with substantial community transmission above the 50 cases per 100,000. Manchester’s positivity rate is currently at 5.8% is DOWN from 6.7% last week; we continue in Phase One. Below is how the rest of the county’s rank. Reminder that the goal is to be below 5% and less than 50 cases per 100,000.

County	PCR Tests Positivity Rate Last 7 Days - County
Belknap	4.90%
Carroll	7.00%
Cheshire	1.50%
Coos	2.80%
Grafton	0.70%
Manchester	5.80%
Merrimack	3.10%
Nashua	5.00%
Rest of Hillsborough	4.90%
Rockingham	4.20%
Strafford	6.30%
Sullivan	4.60%

The following interventions and actions continue to be in place:

- All unvaccinated staff continue to wear an N95 mask and surgical mask.
- All unvaccinated staff are also wearing eye protection in resident care areas.
- All vaccinated staff are wearing a surgical mask, and eye protection in resident care areas.
- We continue to do staff screening before all shifts.
- Next week we will start testing non-vaccinated staff weekly (no longer testing vaccinated staff) (see **below**).
- All residents are assessed for signs and symptoms of Covid-19, 2 times a day.
- All residents on all floors are being encouraged to stay 6’ apart and wear a mask, (see revision **below**).

- Residents are allowed to attend group dining, daily mass, and activities as long as they stay 6' apart (no limit on number of residents together as long as they can maintain 6' distancing), (see revision **below**).
- The annex continues to be our holding zone for incoming un-vaccinated rehab patients/long-term residents needing to be on a 14-day quarantine. If the incoming patient/resident has been fully vaccinated, they no longer have to be placed on a 14-day quarantine and are being admitted to the appropriate floor.

Vaccine News – In-House Vaccination Program:

We have a list of new staff and residents ready to receive the vaccine. With the approval of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine the pharmacy is starting vaccinations again. They will be offering all three vaccines allowing staff, their families and residents to choose which one they prefer. We believe they will be in within the next two weeks.

ZOOM Meeting:

Our next zoom meeting will be on May 20th at 6pm, mark your calendars.

Visitation Guidelines:

You may have heard that Lori Shibinette from DHHS just announced in a Governor's news conference, that the state has absolutely no restrictions at all on nursing home visitation. Please know that **is not** consistent with CMS (Federal) and CDC guidance and that we will be following CMS and CDC guidance as we have been all along. As I have mentioned on our zoom calls, it puts us/MTC, caught in the middle of what the state is saying versus what CMS is requiring us to do.

MTC's visitation guidelines can be found on our web site. Please go to <https://mtcarmelrehabcenter.org/covid-19-update/> .

To Schedule a Visit:

1. Go To: <https://mtcarmelrehabcenter.org/family-members/appointments/>
 2. Read this page.
 3. Near the bottom is where you can schedule a visit; you are able to select either a "Window/Lobby Visit" OR a "Room Visit"
 4. Select the date and time slot you would like; (if the date and/or time is not available it will not allow you to select it.
- **If you have any problems scheduling a visit please call Barbary Gray, Life Enrichment Director, at 935-4607 and she can assist you.**
 - **Compassionate care visits are being scheduled by the nursing staff on the particular floor your loved one is residing; please call them directly to schedule a visit.**

*****NEW*****

Vaccinated vs. Unvaccinated Staff and Residents:

Communal activities within a healthcare setting:

Who should not participate in communal activities?

- Vaccinated and unvaccinated **patients/residents with SARS-CoV-2 infection, or in isolation because of suspected COVID-19**, until they have met [criteria to discontinue Transmission-Based Precautions](#).
- Vaccinated and unvaccinated **patients/residents in quarantine** until they have met criteria for release from quarantine.

What infection prevention and control practices are recommended when planning for and allowing communal activities?

Determining the vaccination status of patients/residents/HCP at the time of the activity might be challenging and might be subject to local regulations. When determining vaccination status, the privacy of the patient/resident/HCP should be maintained (e.g., not asked in front of other patients/residents/HCP). For example, when planning for group activities or communal dining, facilities might consider having patients/residents sign up in advance so their vaccination status can be confirmed and seating assigned. **If vaccination status cannot be determined, the safest practice is for all participants to follow all recommended infection prevention and control practices including maintaining physical distancing and wearing source control.**

Patients/Residents

- Group activities:
 - If all patients/residents participating in the activity are fully vaccinated, then they may choose to have close contact and to not wear source control during the activity.
 - If unvaccinated patients/residents are present, then all participants in the group activity should wear source control and **unvaccinated** patients/residents should physically distance (6') from others.
- Communal dining:
 - Fully vaccinated patients/residents can participate in communal dining without use of source control or physical distancing.
 - If **unvaccinated** patients/residents are dining in a communal area (e.g., dining room) all patients/residents should use source control when not eating and **unvaccinated** patients/residents should continue to remain at least 6 feet from others.

Healthcare Personnel

- In general, fully vaccinated HCP should continue to wear source control while at work. However, fully vaccinated HCP could dine and socialize together in break rooms and conduct in-person meetings without source control or physical distancing. If **unvaccinated** HCP are present, everyone should wear source control and **unvaccinated** HCP should physically distance (6') from others.

COVID 19 Testing Requirements:

- As of 4/28/21 fully vaccinated employees no longer need to be routinely tested for COVID 19. A fully vaccinated employee does need to be tested if they become

symptomatic, or have a known exposure to COVID 19 person. (also, if the facility is participating in response testing or outbreak testing, vaccinated employees must also be tested during the time frame)

- **Unvaccinated Employees need to continue to be tested during routine testing based on the county positivity rate. See table below:**

Table 2: Routine Testing Intervals Vary by Community COVID-19 Activity Level	County Positivity Rate in the past week	Minimum Testing Frequency of <i>Unvaccinated Staff</i>+
Low	<5%	Once a month
Medium	5% - 10%	Once a week*
High	>10%	Twice a week*

Have a good week,
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