



Covid-19 Updates for October 16, 2020

Dear Residents, Families, and Friends,

Unfortunately, I must share with you that we have had an additional Independent Living (IL) resident test positive on our Greensburg campus today. We will again test all of our IL residents in Greensburg, so these residents will be receiving information about when that will take place. Guidelines require that this area of our community remain “closed” for at least 14 days following our last positive COVID test. This means that all public spaces remain closed to our Greensburg IL residents, and in-person activities, trips, salon appointments, etc. must continue to be on hold. Meal delivery will continue, and personal shopping services will be available on Wednesdays and Fridays. Because these are IL residents, visitors may continue to visit following the visitor guidelines, and residents who are not under quarantine precautions may leave the campus. That being said, we strongly encourage caution and wise judgment and suggest that families only visit when necessary and avoid taking residents on outings, except for medical treatment.

We are seeing several local nursing homes and personal care homes on the news for large outbreaks. Our thoughts and prayers are with those residents and staff as they battle this invisible enemy. It would be easy to cast judgment on those experiencing outbreaks, but in reality this could be happening to any of us. As nursing homes and personal care homes move into routine weekly testing, it is anticipated that numbers will increase.

This week finds us in the midst of a significant increase in COVID-19 cases in Westmoreland County. In fact, our county is in the top three counties of most significant spikes in cases in Pennsylvania – that’s a concerning statistic. Because of this, the % positivity rate in the county has jumped to 5.1%, now requiring us to test all of our employees weekly in our Greensburg community.

Murrysville and North Huntingdon remain at monthly testing at this time. If, however, that % positivity rate goes to 10% we’ll need to increase our testing in Greensburg to twice weekly, and move to weekly testing in Murrysville and North Huntingdon. Residents will only need to be tested in response to positive cases. When we do have positive cases, our contact tracing will guide which residents will need to be tested, and the schedule that we will need to follow. We will continue to notify you of any changes in case numbers or testing procedures.

Some of you have asked what’s causing the increase in cases. Public health officials believe it’s related to small gatherings of people who aren’t wearing masks or maintaining social distances of six feet or more. Please practice these precautions faithfully when you’re out in the community or at smaller gatherings...it truly saves lives! Please give thoughtful consideration to where you go and what you do. Remember to wear your masks whenever you are in the

presence of someone who is not a housemate. Yes, even our families should be wearing masks during visits, especially when in an indoor confined space like a car.

It is imperative that our Independent Living residents inform us of any symptoms that they are experiencing that might be related to COVID-19.

- If you have ONE of these symptoms: new or changed cough or are experiencing new shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, please notify your campus director or housing assistant as soon as possible.
- If you have TWO of the following symptoms, please notify your campus director or housing assistant as soon as possible: fever of 100.4 or higher, shaking with chills, chills, headache, muscle pain, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, new loss of taste or smell.
- If you have had contact with another person who has tested positive for Covid-19, or is being tested for Covid-19, please also report this.
- If you have traveled out of state please let your campus director know so that your need for quarantine can be assessed.

Reporting symptoms as soon as possible and following guidelines for quarantining is critical for helping us to control Covid-19 in our Redstone communities.

I also want you to know that the county percent positivity rating has the potential to impact our visit programs. If the county level rises to over 10%, we will need to put a temporary halt to scheduled visits in our Nursing Home and Personal Care Homes. Window and virtual visits will still be possible, but the risk of in-person visiting rises as that percentage rises across the county. Compassionate care visits will still be available for residents who are at end-of-life. Let us hope that the county trends reverse so that we don't need to change our visitor program.

While our visitor program remains intact, it is more important than ever that our visitors follow the established guidelines. Masks must be worn appropriately and social distance must be maintained. Remember that food and drink cannot be consumed during the visit, as this requires the removal of masks. Please also make sure that you are only scheduling ONE in-person visit per-resident each week, to make sure that every resident has an opportunity to be visited.

We are all very tired of running this race, but more than ever the decisions we are making and the ways that we are showing care for one another, matter. If we experience no additional cases, we'll be back in touch next Friday.

Take care –

Vicki

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