



Dear Residents, Families, and Friends of Redstone,

Here are your updates for Friday, August 28, 2020

I feel like a broken record when I say “we’ve survived another week in a pandemic.” It’s been a LONG road, hasn’t it? I recently asked employees what one word they would use to describe the pandemic and how they are feeling. Here are some of their responses: Opportunity; challenging; team; grace; inspirational; growth; creativity; endurance; strength; eye-opening; resilient; refining; marvelous; thankful; adaptable; courageous; proud. It is amazing how positive these words are, isn’t it? While this has been one of the hardest things many of us have lived through, it’s also been a time when we’ve learned so much and grown and gotten stronger together. What’s your word? We would love to hear it. Feel free to reply to this email and we’ll include your word in our collection.

Now for some updates/news:

- One good thing about the length of the pandemic is that we’ve had time to learn about this virus and how it spreads. Scientists and Health Care Professionals are doing research 24/7 to help us all fight this fight. The latest news is actually very good news regarding masks. Science continues to demonstrate that masks do effectively stop the spread of the virus! In fact, it is now known that not only does “my mask protect you and your mask protect me”, but my mask protects you AND me! The most recent studies have proven that wearing a mask helps prevent YOU from getting the virus...and if you do get it, you are more likely to get a mild case. Any type of mask (even cloth) has proven to contain 90% of particles. In a recent study, I read this quote “Consistent mask wearing over the next month could save 70,000 lives.” That’s amazing. Mask up!!
- You have probably heard about new testing requirements that are being established by the federal government related to long term care staff. The rule requires staff testing on a routine basis based on % positivity rate in the county. If the positivity rate is less than 5%, staff must be tested monthly; if the positivity rate is 5-10% staff must be tested weekly and if that rate is greater than 10% staff must be tested twice weekly. That positivity rate must be monitored weekly. Westmoreland County’s positivity rate as of yesterday is 3%, for which we are grateful. We are developing that testing plan and anticipate it to begin in September. At this time, residents are not included in this testing process, unless they are symptomatic or we have a positive case.
- The federal government is also distributing antigen testing machines to all nursing homes in the country by the end of September. Redstone is placing an order for our own antigen machine as well as the molecular/pcr machine, so that we can test residents in other levels of care, too. This will give us the capability of conducting our own testing in house with much faster (same day) results. This will also allow us to do our own flu testing.
- Our visitor program for Personal Care, Skilled Nursing, Terrace, and Garden residents has been robust. Since we launched the program, 740 in-person visits have taken place. That is amazing and we are grateful to have been able to provide families and residents opportunities for in-person visits, when many communities are still unable to do so. Please do remember, though:
  - Make sure that you are scheduling your appointment for the right level of care. If you make an appointment for the wrong level of care, and there are no appointments available at that time for the correct level of care, your

appointment will need to be cancelled. If you have questions about your loved one's level of care, please feel free to call the receptionist on your campus for clarification before scheduling your appointment.

- The easiest way to schedule a visit is by using our scheduling website at <https://redstonefamilyvisitscheduler.as.me/schedule.php>. If you are unable to do so, you may call the receptionist on your campus for assistance with scheduling an appointment.
- Originally we were not permitting pets to be a part of these scheduled visits. Families may now bring one pet (in addition to the humans) to a visit. An up-to-date certification of wellness and vaccination from a veterinarian must be presented at the front desk, in accordance with Redstone's normal pet visitor policy.
- Visitors for all levels must abide by the screening process and follow quarantine procedures. Our list of quarantine states continues to grow and is available here: <http://redstonehighlands.org/News/coronavirus-visitors.html>.

Those who have been in any of these states within the past 14 days, or who have had overnight guests from these states, are asked to quarantine for 14 days before visiting with our residents. Residents and employees, who have been to these states, will also be asked to quarantine upon return.

- At this time, unless the resident is visiting with a spouse, residents may still not visit across levels of care.
- Independent Living Apartment residents may host two visitors at a time in their private apartments. An additional child under the age of 16 may join in the visit. All visitors must enter through the front door for screening. At the request of our families, outdoor visitor dining space is being made available on the patios outside the IL dining rooms. Spaces are limited and on a first-come basis. Two visitors may share a meal with an IL resident in this outdoor space if desired. Families may bring food from outside, or the resident can order takeout service through Morrison. Table service will not be provided by dining services.
- Please also remember that if we have a positive case of Covid in an employee or resident in one of our communities, the visitor program for that campus will be suspended until we once again work our way through the reopening phases. These policies are regulated by the state.

I'll leave you with a story that I shared with our employees today. If you place an egg in a pot of boiling water, it hardens; if you place a carrot in that pot of boiling water, it becomes soft – don't be like either of those. Instead, be like the coffee bean – when placed in that pot of boiling water, it transforms the water! We've all experienced a lot of "heat" over the past months. I'm so grateful for all – employees, residents, families, and friends – who have helped us to transform into a more loving and caring community ready to meet these challenging times.

May God's blessings continue to be with all of us.

*Vicki*

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