



Dear Residents and Families,

Here are your updates for Thursday, July 2, 2020.

As you know from our CEO John Dickson's letter earlier this week, we are in the process of testing those residents and employees who were determined to have possibly had contact with a positive case of COVID-19. So far, this testing has not revealed additional cases. We will update you on this information as it becomes available.

As you've probably noticed if you've watched the news at all, COVID cases are increasing significantly in our region – particularly in Allegheny County, although the Westmoreland county numbers are increasing, too. Contact tracing in Allegheny County has identified a few major areas of concern and sources of these new cases: One is attendance of individuals in group settings, in closed spaces (particularly bars and restaurants) without following infection control practices like wearing masks and social distancing. The other is travel outside of the state and returning with the virus. Many of those being diagnosed are young (average age is 26) and remain asymptomatic but are spreading the virus. While hospitalizations and deaths haven't increased, the projection is that in the next week or two we'll see those numbers increase as well as the parents and grandparents of these younger infected individuals become infected. Throughout this pandemic we have encouraged our employees to follow strict infection control practices, even when away from work and on their own time. We would encourage all of our residents and families to do likewise. Wear a mask at all times, except in the privacy of your own home. Maintain 6 feet social distance when at all possible. Wash your hands thoroughly, and avoid large crowds in close proximity. We continue to encourage all of you to spend time outdoors, where the risk of transmission appears to be much lower.

Last week we told you that we will begin welcoming independent Living (IL) visitors on 7/6/20. Please continue to respect and comply with the no-visitor policy throughout this busy holiday weekend. I encourage you to begin visiting the COVID-19 page on our website regularly to keep up with current visitor policies. The IL visitor policy is available for you on the site, and will be updated if there are changes. <http://redstonehighlands.org/IL%20visitor%20policy%207%206%202020-1.pdf> Visitor policies could change at any time due to active COVID cases, changes in travel policies, etc. It will be worth your time to check the website before coming for a visit.

We finally received guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Health to assist with planning to welcome back visitors in our Personal Care Homes and Skilled Nursing Center. The state guidelines are clear that visits must take place in established "neutral zones," preferably in sheltered outdoor areas. We are working hard to establish these neutral zones and to finalize our visitor policies, and

hope to launch this program on Monday, July 13<sup>th</sup>. Visitors will have to pre-schedule their visits. We will also need volunteers to assist with screening the visitors and escorting the residents to the visits. If you are interested in serving as a volunteer "Visit Host," please contact our Volunteer Services Supervisor Kim Darragh at 724-832-8402 X 378. Establishing a strong group of volunteer Visit Hosts will help us to increase our visitor capacity. We will send another letter next week, focusing on the visiting policy for Personal Care and Nursing. We know that these neutral zone visits may not be the way that you envisioned the return of visitors to these levels of care, but they will help us to provide the safest environment possible for our residents.

When this phase of the visitor program is launched, residents in Personal Care and the Nursing Home will also be able to schedule appointments in our beauty salons. Appointments will be kept separated from Independent Living residents, so that we can maintain safe and separate zones across our levels of care at Redstone. Residents will not be able to visit across levels of care within our buildings, which will also help to preserve these safe zones.

In Galatians 5:13 we read, "For you have been called to live in freedom. Use your freedom to serve one another in love." As we come to this 4th of July weekend, we celebrate the freedom and independence of our beloved United States of America. In our celebrations, and every day, may we continue to make service in love our goal. Happy Independence Day!

Sincerely,

*Vicki*

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