



11/1/21

Dear Residents, Families and Friends:

Fall is certainly here, and the chill in the air is noticeable. It is emotional for me to reflect on what we were coping with a mere one year ago. I found my "Holiday" notes and it was surreal. Our doors were still closed to families and friends, we were preparing to celebrate Thanksgiving with all of you virtually or through a window. My have we come a long way. At this time last year, we had not experienced a single resident COVID positive case, but by years end that had all changed.

We are so glad that as we have gained knowledge of the virus and have accessibility to the vaccination, our regulatory agencies have modified restrictions and given us flexibility with visitation and other regulatory mandates. With that flexibility also comes risk. We have continued to be diligent in our screening and infection control practices, but unfortunately, we have had our first resident positive case since January of this year. Months ago, this would have meant an even more strict "lock down", eliminating all group activities, minimal compassionate care visits, and widespread testing of all staff and residents. Fortunately, due to evolving knowledge and interventions, we are able to do contract tracing to identify individuals who may have been at a higher risk exposure. This decreases the number of unnecessary tests we must perform on both residents and staff members. The new guidance does not require us to automatically restrict visitation, but affords us the ability to assess the situation and make decisions based on knowledge and facts. As outbreak testing continues, we may find it necessary to limit visitation on a unit or section of the building. For now, it is not necessary. We feel it is important for you to know that we are currently in outbreak testing. We understand that everyone has unique circumstances, and although we feel we have quickly isolated the risk, knowledge is power.

We will continue to support open visitation daily from 10:30 am until 6:00 pm. If you would like to visit on off hours, we continue to request that you call in advance so we can alert staff that they will have to assist with completing the required screening process. We continue to require masks during visitation. Our leadership team is discussing the specifics for our Thanksgiving Holiday. We know how important family connections are and we want to support traditions especially after the prolonged isolation of 2020. We will be sending out a Holiday Guide to communicate the details of our holiday season and the related policies. In the meantime, please let the receptionist know if you plan to take your resident out for the Holiday.

As always, our COVID-19 numbers and all updates are kept in real time on our website [www.welcomenursinghome.com](http://www.welcomenursinghome.com) under the COVID-19 Updates link. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me directly, or ask to speak to anyone on our leadership team. We appreciate your continued faith in our care team, and we are dedicated to being a center of excellence in which we provide for wellness of body, mind, and spirit.

Stay Well,

Heidi J. W. Freas MS OTR/L

Director of Quality Assurance