



3/12/21

As we reflect on the one-year anniversary of the Pandemic Shut down, we are able to look ahead with hope and anticipation. With the budding spring flowers, we are reminded that a new season is upon us. A year ago, we were shutting our doors for two weeks to “flatten the curve”, how naïve we once were. Since then, we have been through so much together. Our team is forever grateful for the support and understanding you have offered us during this last year.

Now that the vaccine is more readily available the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services are finally relaxing the guidance for visitation. I know many of you have heard Governor DeWine indicate that visitation is open for facilities. That is true – sort of. We are still awaiting the Ohio Department of Health to officially embrace CMS’s visitation guidelines. Ohio’s restrictions are more conservative than CMS and we are mandated to follow the most stringent guidelines presented. So, what does this mean for Welcome? For now, we will continue to require all visits to be pre-scheduled through social services or our activities department (call 440-775-1491). Anyone visiting must pass the COVID-19 screening and will be offered a COVID-19 test regardless of vaccination status. We have a little more flexibility with the length of the visits, the number of people participating and the frequency of visitation. For residents who are fully vaccinated, they may choose to have physical contact during their visits - HUGS ARE FINALLY WELCOME HERE! This is all great news; we have missed seeing you! We are looking forward to warmer days so we can embrace the sunshine and begin scheduling visitation outside which is the safest option.

We encourage you to become vaccinated when you are able in order to support the reopening measures and protect our greater community. We are working with Lorain County Public Health and our pharmacy Remedi to establish a plan for ongoing vaccination of new residents, staff and those residents who were unable to participate with our vaccination clinics earlier in the year. I have included a FAQ sheet from the Ohio Department of Health as a resource tool regarding vaccination information. It appears that our regulators are tying our ability to move forward and resume some semblance of a normal life to vaccination status.

As we move forward, you will soon have the option to select an in-person or remote care conference. You will continue to receive a quarterly reminder to schedule the meeting. When you call in to schedule with the Receptionist you can indicate your preference at that time. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we navigate the upcoming changes to our processes. It has certainly been a year of change – some good, and some bad. As we redesign our “new normal” we appreciate your feedback so we can continue our quality journey towards excellence.

We will continue maintain our website, [www.welcomenursinghome.com](http://www.welcomenursinghome.com), with the most current COVID-19 Updates, numbers and newsletters. As always, if you have questions or concerns please do not hesitate to reach out.

Stay Well,

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Vice President