



July 20, 2020

Dear Residents and Families,

I realize we are all anxiously awaiting hopeful news for a return to what we took for granted – our old normal. The reality is that we are far from a time when we will be opening our doors to visitors, volunteers and friends. This is a hard truth to embrace, but we must. Although the speed in which we are receiving new guidance has slowed a bit, new interpretations of old guidance are emerging. One example of this new interpretation was received late last week from the Ohio Department of Health. They have clarified that their intent for “window visits” is that the window is to remain closed. If during your window visit you need access to a phone so you can communicate more easily please let us know when you schedule so we can offer technology to support your visit.

Tomorrow, the 21<sup>st</sup> we will be participating with the Mandatory staff baseline COVID-19 testing. We have been told that we will likely receive our facility results next Monday. As you are aware, this is one component that must be completed prior to us offering outside visitation. We are still a bit away from embracing outside visitation since the mandated guidance is rather complicated. We want to be able to offer a safe and comfortable option for our residents so bear with us as we establish our plans. As of now, our conservative approach and aggressive policies have proven successful and we do not want to mis-step now.

The Ohio Department of Health has notified us, that much like the mandatory Staff Testing for COVID-19, we are going to be required to perform mass Resident COVID-19 Baseline Testing. This will begin in early August, and although it will be supported by the Ohio National Guard, our staff will be performing the actual swabbing procedure on our residents. In accordance with Resident Rights, a resident may refuse testing although we would not recommend refusing. Fortunately, we will be able to provide the anterior nasal swabbing which is much more tolerable than the posterior nasal swabbing test kits. We will update you as we receive more education and a better timeline on resident testing.

As a reminder, all of our family and resident communications are uploaded for your reference on our website: [www.welcomenursinghome.com](http://www.welcomenursinghome.com) under the COVID-19 Updates link. If we ever have to update positive Covid-19 numbers for staff or residents it will be done here. As of now, we are still COVID-Free and Welcome Strong. Thank you for your continued support and understanding as we navigate these uncharted territories.

Stay Well,

Heidi J. W. Freas MS OTR/L

Vice President