



February 4, 2022

Dear Residents, Families and Friends:

February certainly came in like a LION. The snowfall and treacherous weather did not intimidate our staff. We could not be prouder of our team. Everyone made efforts to be prepared, coordinating childcare, staying with friends and family closer to Oberlin, and our team members with 4-wheel drive were willing to pick up others to make sure our staffing levels were not challenged. It was actually a great end to the week. It has been a bit since we did an update so I will share with you what has been happening this past month.

We have completed our most recent outbreak testing as it has been greater than 14 days since our last identified staff or resident testing positive for COVID-19. Thankfully, it appears that the case numbers county wide have begun to decline. This last COVID-19 surge put a huge strain on the healthcare system. Due to this strain, the CMS mandate for COVID-19 vaccinations in healthcare facilities was upheld. By mid-February, all staff will either have to begin their vaccination series, file a Religious or Medical exemption, or leave the medical field. Although this adds a large compliance burden on medical facilities, we do not anticipate that the mandate will impact our staffing levels.

This week, the CDC updated their guidance to long term care facilities. Most of the changes are behind the scenes management type modifications, however there are a few modifications that will impact residents and visitors. They are now defining vaccination status as Up To Date (UTD) or not UTD. Someone is considered UTD if they have completed their first vaccination (series if Pfizer or Moderna), and if they have been vaccinated for 5 months or longer, they have received the booster. If you are eligible for a booster but have not had the booster you are considered NOT Up to Date. If you have completed the series, but are not five months past your last injection you are considered UTD because you are not yet eligible for a booster. Residents who are out of the facility (either at the hospital, or out with family) for 24 hours and are Not UTD on their vaccination will be required to quarantine for 10 days.

The other CDC change that impacts families is regarding visitation. Visitors who meet the community guidelines to be released from quarantine or isolation (5 days and then mask for an additional 5 days) will not be permitted to visit. Visitors can resume visitation once they have completed a 10-day quarantine or isolation. If you are required to quarantine or isolate, then visitation can resume after 10

days. We understand this is longer than required for other community engagement, but this is what skilled facilities are required to enforce. If you have questions about either of these changes, or the definition of UTD and not UTD feel free to reach out. We understand how confusing these modifications can be and we are doing our best to keep it simple and clear.

The CDC guidelines also require us to educate families and residents regarding the importance of remaining UTD with vaccines as well as the interventions you can take in the community and in our facility to protect yourself from COVID-19. Wearing source control, physical distancing (greater than 6 feet) and performing regular hand hygiene are important interventions you can implement to protect yourself and loved ones. Welcome Nursing Home has implemented several additional mitigation efforts to protect our residents from this virus. You can reference these strategies on our website: [www.welcomenursinghome.com](http://www.welcomenursinghome.com) under the COVID-19 Updates link. This is also where you will find the most recent numbers of staff, residents, and contractors who have tested positive for COVID-19.

On a exciting and positive note, we have partnered with Oberlin College to be an internship site for Winter Term Students who are exploring Pre-Medicine majors. We have 6 students who will be here with us for 6 weeks working throughout the facility and shadowing employees. They have already been a huge help and have brought light and energy to our residents. I can see such amazing potential in this program, and we are excited to be mentoring the next generation of caregivers.

We have some fun and exciting activities scheduled for February. I have attached the calendar to this email. The students are putting together some additional Black History Month activities, games and education sessions to share with the residents. We want to thank you for your continued support and understanding as this pandemic constantly evolves. It is with great honor and pride that we serve. We thank you for entrusting our team to provide your loved ones with care and compassion.

As always, feel free to reach out with any questions or for additional clarification.

Stay Well,

Heidi