

UPDATED VISITATION PROCEDURES

To all of our residents, family members/representatives, and staff.

While CMS guidance has focused on protecting our residents from COVID-19, they have increasingly recognized that physical separation from family and other loved ones has taken a physical and emotional toll on both our residents and families alike. They have finally acknowledged that residents may feel socially isolated, which can in turn lead to an increased risk of depression, anxiety, and levels of distress.

In light of the above, CMS has revised their guidance regarding visitation in Nursing Homes at this point in the pandemic as follows:

CORE PRINCIPALS OF COVID-19 PREVENTION

- Any visitor who tests positive for COVID-19, has symptoms of COVID-19, or currently meet the criteria for quarantine, should **NOT** enter the facility. We will continue to screen and monitor all visitors entering the facility.
- Hand hygiene (use of alcohol-based hand rub is preferred).
- Face coverings or masks (covering mouth and nose) and physical distancing at least six feet between people, in accordance with CDC guidance is still expected.
- Cleaning and disinfecting of highly touched surfaces in the facility will be completed often, in addition to any other designated areas. Hand hygiene will be expected.
- Instructional signage will be displayed throughout the facility, educating visitors on signs and symptoms of COVID-19, infection control precautions, other applicable facility practices including the proper use of face coverings or masks, designated entryways, hand hygiene, etc.
- Appropriate staff use of PPE.
- Effective quarantining of residents experiencing COVID-19 or COVID symptoms.
- Resident and staff testing conducted as required by Federal, State and Local regulations.

The above core principles are consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance for Nursing Homes and should be adhered to at all times. Please note the following:

- Unscheduled routine indoor and outdoor visitation is allowed for all residents with no time constraints.
- Residents can have multiple visitors but must still physically distance, especially if all the individuals are not vaccinated. No parties or large gatherings can occur indoors at Crystal Care Center, because of the inability to physically distance at this time.
- Visitors must limit visits to the **resident's room only**, or other designated visitation areas.
- If a resident's roommate is unvaccinated or otherwise immunocompromised, the room visit must take place in an alternate designated visitation area.

- If the nursing home's county COVID-19 community level of transmission is **substantial to high**, all residents and visitors, regardless of vaccination status, must wear face coverings or masks, and physically distance at all times. In areas of **low to moderate transmission**, the safest practice is for residents and visitors to still wear face coverings or masks and physically distance, especially if either party is at increased risk for severe disease or are unvaccinated.
- If a resident and all of their visitors are fully vaccinated, and the resident is not moderately or severely immunocompromised, they may choose not to wear a face covering or mask, if the community level of transmission is not substantial to high.
- Visitors must wear face coverings or masks at all times when around other residents or healthcare personnel, regardless of vaccination status.
- If a resident is fully vaccinated, they can choose to have touch or close contact with their visitor in accordance with CDC guidelines.
- Unvaccinated residents may also have close contact and touch; however all individuals will need to be educated as to the potential risks based on CDC guidelines and must wear all appropriate PPE.
- While it is safer for visitors not to enter the facility during an outbreak investigation, you may still visit. You will be made aware of the potential risks of visiting during an outbreak investigation and **MUST** adhere to the core principles of infection prevention per CDC guidelines.
- CMS strongly encourages all visitors to become vaccinated. If you have any questions regarding benefits or risks of receiving the vaccine, please contact the facility and you will be provided with educational materials to assist you in your decision-making process.
- Visitors are not required to be tested or vaccinated or show proof of vaccination as a condition of visitation. If a visitor declines to disclose their vaccination status, the visitor should wear a face covering or mask at all times, and physically distance at least 6 feet.
- Compassionate care visits are allowed at all times.
- All healthcare workers must be permitted to come into the facility as long as they are not subject to a work exclusion or showing signs or symptoms of COVID-19. These workers must present proof of vaccination, or twice weekly testing.
- While adhering to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention, communal activities, and dining, along with resident outings may occur. Book clubs, crafts, movies, exercise, and

bingo are all activities that can be facilitated with some alterations to adhere to CDC guidelines.

- The safest approach is for everyone, regardless of vaccination status, to wear face coverings or a mask while in communal areas of the facility.
- Residents are allowed to leave the facility as they choose. The facility will educate and remind the resident and any individual accompanying the resident to follow all recommended infection prevention practices, including wearing a face covering or mask, physical distancing, promoting hand hygiene, and encouraging all those around the resident to do the same.

Upon the resident's return, the facility will take the following actions:

- Screen the resident for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
- If the resident or family member reports possible close contact to an individual with COVID-19 while outside of the facility, the resident will be tested for COVID-19 regardless of vaccination status. The resident will be placed in quarantine if they are unvaccinated.
- If the resident develops signs or symptoms of COVID-19 after the outing, the resident will be placed on transmission-based precautions, regardless of vaccination status.
- The facility also reserves the right to test any unvaccinated resident without signs or symptoms of COVID-19, if they leave the premises frequently or for a prolonged period of time, such as 24 hours or more for example.
- The facility also reserves the right to quarantine any unvaccinated residents who leave the facility, if based on a risk assessment, some uncertainty exists about their adherence to or the adherence of those around them in following CDC guidelines.
- All residents will be monitored daily for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
- **NOTE:** On 11-4-21, CMS mandated that all healthcare workers be fully vaccinated to provide care to patients. All staff must receive the first dose of an approved vaccine by 12-5-21 and be fully vaccinated by 1-4-22. Staff can approach management to request a medical or religious exemption in lieu of taking the vaccine if approved.

We understand that this is a lot of information to digest, so if you have any questions, feel free to contact Anthony Wheaton, Administrator, Natalie Barr, Director of Nursing, or Angie Washington, Asst. Director of Nursing at 419-512-1711.

We would like to thank each of you for the love and support you provide your family members throughout the year.

Happy Holidays to you all!