



May 22, 2020

Dear Patients, Families and Community:

I hope that you have had a good week and have remained healthy. On behalf of Dinwiddie Health & Rehab Center, I wanted to provide you with an update for the week.

### **COVID-19**

As of the date of this letter, we have no patients or employees that have tested positive for COVID-19. I am pleased to share this good news with you.

### **Mitigation**

In last week's update, I mentioned that we are closely monitoring patients for subtle signs and less common symptoms of COVID-19. Over time and as the medical community has learned more about COVID-19, guidance from the CDC and other trusted agencies has evolved from monitoring patients for respiratory symptoms and fever to now include symptoms such as new loss of taste or smell, muscle aches, chills and some gastrointestinal symptoms. Some patients may also be asymptomatic even after testing positive for the virus.

Early identification of any sign or symptom of COVID-19 is key in preventing the spread of the virus. For this reason, we remain focused on the basics of infection control and prevention which includes isolating the patient and protecting patients and staff by using appropriate PPE. The added measure of increased high touch disinfection has been in place for weeks now and has become a routine part of the center's operations.

### **Testing**

Federal and state officials have recently spoken out about increased COVID-19 testing in the long term care setting as part of a re-opening plan for the country and state. While we currently have adequate testing capability and have been testing patients as deemed appropriate by practitioners and the local health department, plans for prevalence testing in the center have not yet been solidified with the health department. When we are able to move forward with prevalence testing, we will make all patients and families aware of our plan. We await state-specific guidance on any proposed, phased re-opening of nursing centers.

## **PPE**

Our supply of PPE continues to be adequate and is being appropriately used in the center. The CDC offers guidance for optimization of PPE, which we are following. We are universally using facemasks throughout the center and using full PPE when providing care to patients in isolation.

## **Visitation**

Several months have passed since the federal mandate to restrict nursing home visitation. While we recognize that video calls, phone calls and cards are no substitute for face-to-face interaction, we acknowledge that continued communication by any means available is invaluable. We strive to make patients aware that their families are connected to the center and receive regular communication about activities, special events, and the overall well-being of their loved one. We will continue to schedule video calls as a means of visually connecting patients and families.

## **Communication**

In addition to any individualized updates you receive about your loved one, we remain committed to providing you with regular communication about the status of COVID-19 in the center. If you have questions about our efforts to prevent COVID-19 or the status of your loved one, you are welcome to contact the center at any time.

## **Thank You**

The community has shown tremendous support for healthcare workers, including our staff. We thank you for your continued expressions of support to uplift the staff and patients. As a thank you to the staff, we celebrated National Skilled Nursing Care Week last week with a variety of activities. While this year's celebration was different than those in the past, we were able to make the week special for staff and patients.

As always, please feel free to reach out to me directly with concerns or questions.

Sincerely,



Kenneth Byers, LNHA  
Administrator