

COVID-19 UPDATES

11/11/2020 – VISITATION REMAINS POSTPONED

Dear Residents and Family Members:

As a result of a previous isolated positive staff and/or resident case, **Lutheran Care Center currently remains in postponed visitation status.** There have been no new resident or staff Covid confirmed cases identified since the last employee tested positive on 11/07/20. However, as of this morning, we have five residents on one unit experiencing upper respiratory symptoms, specifically, a cough, where we are in the process of testing to rule out COVID. Any roommates of those residents are also being monitored and tested out of an abundance of caution. The unit is currently quarantined, pending results of their COVID tests. As per DOH guidance, weekly staff testing is ongoing.

An analysis of federal data found that new weekly COVID-19 cases among U.S. nursing home residents nearly quadrupled from the end of May through late October in 20 states where hospitalizations are surging. NYS DOH's mitigation measures are intended to keep infections out of long term care facilities. While I understand that COVID fatigue and frustration regarding visitation restrictions are mounting, LCC is bound by all existing NYS Department of Health rules and regulations. Last weekend, several LCC family members were protesting ongoing nursing home visitation restrictions on Route 44, and it was reported that, as a result of those restrictions, a family member attempted to gain unauthorized entry to the facility. **We respect and appreciate your efforts and remain hopeful that your voices will be heard by our regulators in Albany.** Unfortunately, until that time, deviation from DOH regulations can result in imposition of sanctions, including withholding of federal funds and/or monetary fines for us. Pending resumption of visitation, I encourage everyone to take advantage of the availability of virtual visits and window visits. Of course, nothing compares to seeing your loved one in person, but we are fortunate that there are still options to remain connected to our residents. Since visitation guidance can be revised at any time, please check this website frequently for the latest information.

This week the Governor confirmed that the accelerating rate of new U.S. cases is especially worrying. Even in New York State, the COVID test positivity rate increased to 2.69% (excluding cluster areas), so we must respond with more commitment to wearing masks and physical distancing.

To utilize FaceTime, Skype, and/or Window Visits in lieu of in-person visitation, please contact Carolyn at **Ext. 231 or 845-235-8231 as early as possible on Thursdays or, at the latest, by 12 noon on Fridays** to schedule your virtual visit. **We are also scheduling Thanksgiving Day visits now** to accommodate as many friends and families as possible, so again, please contact Carolyn to secure your appointment. For assistance with any resident-specific questions or concerns, the Director of Nursing, Nurse Managers and our Social Workers are ready and willing to help.

Attempts to protect nursing home residents from COVID-19 without controlling community spread, is a losing battle. As always—we all must do our part: Wear a mask. Get tested. Stop the spread.

Stay well.

Patricia Ludington, RN, Administrator

