

November 17, 2020

Dear Residents and Families,

Each week I continue to send, via email and posting on our website (www.samaritancampus.com) an update as to the status of COVID-19 here at the Samaritan Campus. This week this communication comes to you – as a letter!

As we approach the Thanksgiving week, I want to express my thanks, on behalf of all of us, for your ongoing patience with the limitations that we are under. Last week Friday, it was 8 months since we needed to close our doors to outside visitors and families. This has been one of the most difficult times ever for residents and families. Staff really do a fantastic job of doing all they can to help “be their family”; virtual visits and window visits help a little bit – but we all miss seeing each other in person and sharing hugs, especially now.

I am extremely proud of the infection prevention mindset and actions of our staff. Additionally, residents continue to be very mindful of the wearing of masks when outside of their room. They continue to be flexible and tolerant of the many changes that have needed to take place to keep everyone safe and well. Thank you all!

As I have shared, we continue to test residents weekly and the staff twice weekly. This is due to the positivity rate within Washington County. As you listen to the news, we continue to hear about the extreme number of cases in the majority of counties around the State. A “critically high” category has been added to the classifications. The County is there. Please protect yourself and your neighbor.

We, at Samaritan, have been very fortunate with a very limited number of cases with our residents. We have had a cumulative of five resident cases (some directly from the hospital) and nineteen staff.

We have, however had over 117 instances of staff being out for a 10-14 day period of time as a precautionary measure when they have symptoms or have been in direct contact with someone positive (without PPE). This has caused staff to work an extensive amount of overtime to help cover these shifts. Combining the necessary steps to prevent any spread – AND helping covering open shifts, is nothing short of heroic. I mean this sincerely that we would not be where we are today without our amazing staff.

As we all work to reinforce or change behavior with mask wearing, hand washing, social distancing and avoiding any gatherings, we continue to work with our Medical Director and consultant pharmacist on procedures and recommendations for our facility.

We await the trials and approval of a COVID-19 vaccine. Our critical population is expected to be among the first to receive it when it is available.

We want to be as best prepared as possible. We have asked our pharmacy to provide us any materials when they have them. This information will be provided to residents and families when we receive it.

We ask that you think and talk about your acceptance of refusal of the vaccine once it is available. We understand that the decision time may be short from notification to delivery. CVS and Walgreens Pharmacies are working with the US Dept. of Health and Human Services as part of Operation Warp Speed. The plan is to get the vaccine out as quickly as possible, once approved.

Again, we do not have any definite information yet, but anticipate this in the next month or two.

Our window visits continue with now upgraded heat and enclosed tents for visitors to have a more pleasurable experience while visiting. With the upcoming holidays, we will NOT be restricting the number or age of visitors in the tents. Your furry creatures are welcome too. We will not be having visits on Thanksgiving day but have times available on the 25th and 27th. When you call for reservations, however, please ensure that we have at least one contact name and number. You as a family will have to decide what you are comfortable with in regards to number of people in a 10x10 foot tent.

However, due to having one new positive resident case this week we will be restricting visits for some of our residents for safety precautions for the next two weeks.

For now, residents will be inside and visitors outside. As the virus numbers go down we will be able to start safe inside visits. This will take all of us to be vigilant to Stop The Spread!

Please continue to share calls, cards, gifts, pictures and Holiday decorations with the residents here. We will do our best to help with those holiday touches. Children's handmade greeting cards and pictures continue to be a great hit!

As always, please do not hesitate to call. Our commitment is to be transparent and informative as possible.

Thank you for helping hold each other up during these challenging days and months.

We give thanks for life and family – and for each of you.

Sincerely,

Mari Beth Borek

Mari Beth Borek, NHA
Campus Administrator