



COVID-19 News

Keeping COVID-19 At Bay During the Holidays

Healthcare workers are exposed to COVID-19 in every increasing rates. Since “The Reopening” and the launch of the holiday season, nearly 5% of all people tested in Merrimack County are positive for SARS-COV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

The odds are that 5 of our employees will test positive. On 11/04/2020, an Assisted Living employee tested positive. Two weeks later, on 11/18/2020, a 2nd Floor employee tested positive. Reports show a 47% “attack rate” on residents in long-term care and a 10% mortality rate. At Presidential Oaks, this could mean 40 residents becoming infected and 4 passing away.

Presidential Oaks does everything in its power to keep COVID at bay. Non-essential people are prohibited; Employees are screened daily for symptoms; Employees also wear a mask and eye protection; and Employees are tested regularly. These exhausting efforts should be all that is necessary to protect our residents.

Fortunately, thanks to stringent infection control practices, no residents have tested positive for the virus. However, the stress of this pandemic is taking its toll on residents, employees, and families alike.

Presidential Oaks will remain vigilant throughout the coming months. In the meantime, we wait for a vaccine (see page 2).

There is Hope on the Horizon!

The COVID-19 Vaccine

Viruses invade cells and multiply. The immune system uses red cells to carry oxygen and white cells to fight infection. Offensive white cells digest germs and leave behind parts called antigens. Defensive white cells produce antibodies that attack the antigens and infected cells. Once infected, it can take weeks to fight the virus. Then, the immune system remembers how to protect the body against that virus.

Vaccines fool the body into producing “memory” cells (this typically takes a few weeks). So, a person can be infected just before or after vaccination and get sick if the vaccine does not have enough time to provide protection. Also, the process of building immunity can cause symptoms, such as fever. These symptoms are normal and a sign that the body is building immunity.

Three Types of COVID-19 vaccines

- **mRNA** vaccines contain material from the virus that prompt one to make copies of the protein. The body recognizes that the protein should not be there and fights it and builds memory cells to fight the virus in the future.
- **Protein Sub-Unit** vaccines include harmless proteins from the virus. The immune system recognizes that the proteins don't belong and makes memory cells and antibodies to recognize and fight the virus.
- **Vector** vaccines contain a “Viral vector” (a weakened live virus that has genetic material from the COVID-19 virus inserted in it). Once the Viral Vector is inside cells, it gives the cells instructions to make the COVID-19 protein. Using these instructions, cells make copies of the protein. The immune system recognizes that the proteins don't belong and makes memory cells and antibodies to recognize and fight the virus.

Timeline

The vaccine is being distributed in phases. Phase 1a includes long-term care residents and healthcare workers. We have not received official word, but news reports indicate that we could receive one of the vaccines before year end.

Social Visits

Per CMS, Social Visits may only occur if the state's test positivity rate is below 5%. As of this writing, the rate hovers around 5% and is expected to rise. While we are able, we will advocate for these important times.

Limited to (2) Visitors over the age of 12

Skype Visits	email visits@presidentialoaks.org	Resident's Room*
Phone Visits	email visits@presidentialoaks.org	Resident's Phone only
Outdoor Visits	call 603-225-6644 to be screened	Under the Car Port
Indoor Visits	call 603-225-6644 to be screened	Main Lobby Cafe

**Retirement Living Residents partake in the Nurse's Office to access wifi*

Compassionate Visit Options

Limited to (1) Visitor on a Case-By-Case Basis

End of Life is not the only reason that Presidential Oaks might advocate for a visit outside of a "Social Visit." If a resident is grieving a recent death, needs a loved one to encourage them to eat, has had a significant life change, or the like, we complete a Compassionate Visit Review.

Essential Appointments

We *strongly* discourage all non-essential trips. However, essential appointments must be coordinated with the nurse. But, please consider this first:

- The resident is *likely to be exposed to COVID-19* due to high transmission rate throughout New Hampshire;
- When the resident returns, all other facility *residents must evacuate to their rooms* so the exposed resident can be escorted back to their room;
- The resident must be on *Quarantine for 14-Days*, which requires staff to deliver all meals/medications and use valuable masks, gowns, and gloves;
- Quarantine for unnecessary trips will incur fees for escort, meals, etc., but no payment can replace the valuable time used.

Gifts and Deliveries

Ok, we don't want to be a Grinch, but...

You just want your loved one to feel loved, but, every time a gift is placed on *The Bench*, a person leaves their work to bring it in; Another person leaves their assignment to transport it; and another person brings it to the resident. Please consider the resources that will be needed to help with your gift.

- The Sunshine Cart leaves the Lobby daily at 3:00 p.m. If the gift arrives after 3:00 p.m., it will be delivered the next day.
- If The Cart is full, your gift may have to wait until the next day;
- Items too large to fit on The Cart will wait until Friday at 11:00 a.m.; There is a delivery fee for Large Items; There is a disposal fee.
- We do not assist with assembly or provide batteries.

Non-Essential Trips

- The “cut off” for most states to “allow” visitors is 10 cases per 100,000 people. The NH rate is >50 and there are 128 active cases in Concord.
- When COVID outbreaks occur on long-term care, 47% of residents will be infected and 10% of those will not survive;
- When an exposed resident returns, all facility *residents must evacuate the corridors* so the “newly exposed” resident can be escorted to their room;
- The exposed resident must be *Quarantined and monitored for 14-Days*, which requires the use of staff time, masks, gowns, and gloves;
- Quarantine for unnecessary trips will incur fees for escort, meals, etc., but no payment can replace the valuable time used for unnecessary purposes.

It is likely that your loved one will *be exposed to COVID-19 when on a trip. We strongly discourage and do not advocate for non-essential trips. We fully support Essential appointments, which are coordinated with the nurse.*