

RE: COVID Related Communication For Residents and Concerned Loved Ones.

March 16th, 2023, 5PM

Dear Family Members,

The New Corona Virus represents an historic infection control challenge that continues to test the very best of our National and State response systems and challenges the very best of our hospital systems and nursing homes, where residents are especially vulnerable.

Despite the backing of the United State and the World, data from the international scientific teams is still contradictory, inconclusive and inadequate to understand the basics, like how is the disease transmitted. Some suggest that the virus is carried and spread by seemingly healthy people, making carriers difficult to identify. Others have suggested that the virus may linger much longer than believed and be capable of being moved in air. The CDC has steadfastly held onto directives aimed at reducing droplet exposure and screening policies designed to identify those with fevers and who travelled to foreign countries. The CDC recently added some confirmed new symptoms, nearly six months after the virus ravaged China, and after the virus has spread throughout much of the globe. Every day we have more questions and learn more, but scientists still know little about the virus and its methods of transmission. In turn, our government has been slow to change directives despite initial directives not being nearly as effective as predicted. Governmental efforts underway all make scientific assumptions that may prove incomplete or inaccurate. What we do know is that the virus that causes COVID 19 spreads efficiently and is virulent. It is also apparent that the CDC is a leading authority, and combined with the directives of the State and Local Health Departments are the directives we must follow.

Quite some time ago, Bellhaven Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing Care put into place a series of precautions designed by the CDC to slow the spread of the virus including limiting visitors, screening for symptoms, taking temperatures, training on infectious disease controls, enhanced cleaning and Personal Protective Equipment, and restricting visitors, restricting and/or limiting group activities etc..... We continue these protocols and have since added isolation and testing, when, and how, permitted by governmental authorities. As has been the case in thousands of US skilled nursing facilities and many more around the globe, governmental directives and our diligent implementation, likely slowed the rate of transmission but did not eliminate it. Likewise, governmental recommended PPE protocol has been modified due to international shortages and the Government's inability to assist in obtaining the quantity of PPE that would have previously been considered best practice.

Hospitals, ships, schools and entire towns, cities and States have had tragic outcomes. Last month, New York State for example, estimated that 13.9% of its mobile population or 1.4 million people have already been infected in the state. Other experts put the number much higher.

Many of you may yourself be directly or indirectly affected or know others who are affected by the New Coronavirus. If you are affected, please know that our hearts and thoughts are with you. As lifelong caregivers, we are pained that something we know so little about and is so powerfully destructive is in our midst. Unfortunately, Bellhaven Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing Care has not been immune.

UPDATE:

03/16/23

There are **6 NEW** confirmed residents infected with COVID-19 in the past 24 hours.

Cumulatively 2.6 % of in-house-residents are classified as COVID positive based upon recent testing or based upon observation of respiratory symptoms consistent with the existence of the virus. Of that number some are symptomatic and some are not symptomatic as defined by the CDC

Cumulatively, no in-house staff are believed to be positive for the virus that causes COVID 19 and CDC guidelines are being followed for return to work. CDC screening guidelines for all staff continue to be followed. Please see https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fhealthcare-facilities%2Fhcp-return-work.html for more detail on CDC screening guidelines.

There have been a total of 3 (since March,2023) (**2 NEW**) different staff members (all but 3 staff are negative and have returned to work safely) who have reportedly tested positive for the virus. Since some staff are treated outside of our facility these numbers are believed to be accurate based upon reporting to us—but not confirmed. It is also not known whether the exposure to the virus was from our community or a different community.

As of today, we had **6 NEW** resident cases diagnosed with Covid-19 that was in our facility at the time the test was given, this number brings our cumulative total to **6 NEW** resident(s) and **2 NEW** staff member(s). Total number of in-house residents that are positive for the virus is 7.

COVID-19 rapid test kits are being provided for you at the facility and once you arrive, you can use them for yourself and your family members by testing yourself outside the building or in assigned areas, preferably your car. . Should you come up positive we are required to report this to NYS. This is for all families and friends who visit your loved ones.

Visitation resumed 8/23/21. If anyone is interested you can call our recreation department to schedule a facetime call with your loved one at 631-286-8100 ext 727. If you have any questions you may contact Glenn Grodner, LMSW @ ggrodner@bellhavccenter.com. .

Please understand that testing, at best, determines whether someone has the virus. It does not determine who will become fatally, seriously, mildly ill or who will remain asymptomatic. False negatives and false positives have also been reported. Likewise, a negative test does not mean, at this time, that a person will not develop signs or symptom of the disease. Beyond testing, other statistics can be materially misleading. There may be under-reporting in non-regulated communities such as towns and cities because of the lack of a system to collect data; lack of availability of testing; and lack of ability to detect when COVID 19 contributed to a stroke, heart attack, blood clot or other symptom which causes a death.

In a nursing home, residents are monitored frequently for signs and symptoms but the CDC symptom list has changed and may be incomplete. All the symptoms of COVID have not been identified. Scope of testing of non-symptomatic residents is largely determined by the local department of health policy and availability of tests. A death is classified as a COVID 19 death whenever a COVID 19 positive person passes, no matter whether COVID 19 had anything to do with that death or not and no matter whether the facility is permitted by advanced directive to use life-saving measures or not. COVID 19 has been deadly but there are likewise those, even those who have other illnesses and/or of advanced age that have pulled through and returned to

baseline. All the factors that lead to dramatically different results are being studied, but there is no FDA approved treatment plan and indeed almost no guidance on this subject from governmental officials at all. Each treating physician is left to determine how, and if, to treat COVID 19. At Bellhaven Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing Care, the Medical team is led by Dr. Roche has been consulting with other treating physicians, and experts in the field in an attempt to create medically sound plans for our Residents.

Families of infected residents have all been notified in the event that your loved one has been affected by the New Corona Virus, but that does not mean that each and every family member has been notified. If you are not the person responsible for your loved one's care, please check with the person who is for updates. If you are the person who is responsible for your loved one's care, please share this letter and other information with other concerned friends and family members.

We thank those who have expressed support, shown kindness and appreciation to our professional and dedicated staff. We cannot assure success or that governmental guidelines and directives will be judged kindly in hindsight after more facts and information become available, but we are working hard to prevent spread. We love our residents and are dedicated to their care. We have never felt as close to one another as we do in this time of adversity and know that while you are not physically here with us, we feel your support and hope you feel ours. We will not be perfect, but we will do our best to continue to communicate about the Facility generally and keep you up to date. We hope you are doing well, stay healthy, and are doing your part to keep others safe.

If you have any questions/concerns, please contact Suzanne Hogan, Administrator 631 286-8100 x702 or Glenn Grodner, Director of Social Work (631) 286-8100 x747. Alternatively, if you desire to communicate anonymously, please call the Complaint and Compliment Hotline at (855)490-0051 or send an e-mail to REPORTS@SNFHOTLINE.ORG. This hotline is administered by an independent third party to help assure your voice will be heard without disclosing your name.

Thank you.

Very Truly Yours,

Suzanne Hogan, on behalf of The Care Staff at Bellhaven Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing Care