

June 19, 2020

Message to Duncaster Residents and Families

Michael A. O'Brien, President and CEO

As we enter the second week of our gradual reopening, Duncaster continues to be COVID-19 free and there are no pending cases campus-wide. While this is great news and our situation at the moment is favorable we cannot let our guard down or get complacent as this virus is dangerous, spreads too efficiently between humans, and the last thing we want is an outbreak.

My message to all of you today is about personal responsibility. For the past 100+ days we have developed and implemented important policies, procedures and restrictions to ensure the safety and well-being of our entire community. Every day staff members are reminded of their own responsibility, both at Duncaster and in their personal lives, for making good decisions and following infection control guidelines to protect themselves and the health and safety of those who live at Duncaster. That pledge of responsible behavior comes from a deep commitment to provide compassionate care and service. We care deeply about each and every one of you. That's why we do the work we do. It's our culture. With that commitment also comes great personal sacrifice as staff must balance our personal and professional obligations. And day after day we have never lost our way, staying informed, managing risks, considering the rights and well-being of our residents, being aware of the health consequences of our decisions and using common sense. That's our responsibility and we will continue to use good judgement and fight as hard as we can to keep the virus out. I am so proud of the strength and commitment of our staff.

Responding and adapting to the impact of this pandemic is a community effort and Duncaster needs everyone; residents, staff and families to take responsibility to keep the virus out of our community. We know that the virus is highly contagious and can spread very easily and unknowingly between people. The best way we know to prevent the spread is to avoid being exposed and to follow our infection control guidelines.

- Wear a cloth face covering or mask (covering your nose and mouth) at all times while you are with other people.

- Put distance between you and others whenever you leave your apartment home.
- Maintain a social distance of at least six feet when around others.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Use hand sanitizer when soap and water isn't available.
- Cover sneezes or cough with a tissue or with your elbow.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces often.

With considerable caution we have loosened certain restrictions, opening the salon and the medical clinic, and have added family garden visits. And while the State of Connecticut is now into Phase 2 of its reopening plan, we must remember that the Duncaster community is different from the population at large. While the COVID-19 virus attacks all ages, those over 65 are among those at greatest risk, and therefore we must remain more cautious as more social mobility only increases the opportunity for the virus to spread

I know that everyone is physically and emotionally fatigued; however, we cannot fall into a false sense of security. Until there is treatment or a vaccine for COVID-19, mitigating the community spread of the disease is largely up to all of us. We must do the best we can to control the destructive capacity of this virus. I know our staff is committed to responsible and respectful behavior. As such I need everyone, the entire Duncaster community needs everyone, to commit to the guidelines and restrictions we have established, particularly for family visitation and leaving the campus. As a community, during this extremely difficult time, we need to be considerate and kind to each other. It's the fair and respectful course of action. It's a responsibility we all share.

Be well. Be safe.

