



June 26, 2020

Message to Duncaster Residents and Families

Michael A. O'Brien, President and CEO

This week we tested all of our Skilled Nursing and Memory Care Assisted Living residents at the Caleb Hitchcock Health Center. I am very pleased to report that all tested negative. The Duncaster community remains COVID-19 free. This continued great news is a tribute to the infection control measures implemented by the leadership team and the personal commitment of all our staff to protect themselves and the health and safety of those who live and work at Duncaster.

Testing will continue to be an important strategy for Duncaster to mitigate the risk of COVID-19. The following is a summary of our ongoing testing plans.

Caleb Hitchcock Health Center:

As mandated by the Executive Order from the Governor we will be testing all staff and residents on a weekly basis beginning the week of July 6th.

Assisted Living-Memory Care Assisted Living (Dogwood) and Social Assisted Living (Talcott Notch/Thistle Way):

As mandated by the Executive Order from the Governor we will be testing all staff and residents on a weekly basis beginning the week of July 6th.

Independent Living:

All staff who may have to enter residents' homes have and will continue to be tested on a regular basis. In addition, all other staff working in the Independent community will be tested based upon Department of Public Health guidance. A plan is currently being developed to do another round of resident testing in mid-July.

For both Caleb Hitchcock Health Center and Social Assisted Living, the Governor's executive order states that we can stop testing once there are no new positive cases among staff and residents for at least 14 days. However, if one resident or staff member tests positive, which is considered an outbreak, weekly testing must resume.

While our results continue to be favorable and the State of Connecticut's COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and related deaths are continuing to slow, this week's news of the coronavirus resurgence across the country is a stark reminder of how quickly this virus can spread if we let our guard down. What we have witnessed is a reflection of careless behavior and total disregard to the danger of this virus. You will see what I

mean if you drive through West Hartford Center. You would get the feeling that it is life as normal. The reality is that this is no time to relax and our leadership team worries about complacency. As noted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, we must continue to take the threat of the coronavirus seriously and continue to take individual responsibility for abating the spread of the deadly contagion. Knowing that our residents are among the most vulnerable we must remain committed to preventing the virus from coming on to our campus.

This past week we have allowed more family visitation; opened the salon, medical clinic and physical therapy; and resumed housekeeping services. This re-opening plan was implemented to enhance the well-being of our residents but also was done with a great deal of concern regarding the increased risk of exposure and transmission. Every day we are faced with new challenges with the COVID-19 virus. What we have learned this week is that the road to recovery will not always be smooth—there will be bumps in the road. We may move quicker one week and slower the next. If there is evidence of an outbreak or a lack of compliance with our policies and procedures we may need to backtrack and reverse course. Only by working together, will we be successful in keeping our community safe and healthy.

Please keep the message of Dr. Anthony Fauci in mind as you navigate during this very difficult time: *“You have an individual responsibility to yourself. But you have a societal responsibility. Because if we want to end this outbreak ... we’ve got to realize that we are part of the process.”* And, as a reminder amid rising infection numbers and increased personal interaction, practice thorough and frequent hand hygiene, consistently wear facial masks when in public and maintain social distancing of at least six feet.

While I know this is an incredibly frustrating time for everyone please trust that everything we are doing is for the safety and well-being of our residents and staff.

Be well. Be safe.

See Attachment: Some residents have requested guidance regarding off campus activities and whether to engage in them. While we strongly encourage residents to stay on campus, we are distributing our assessment of the level of risk of various activities. We will continue to update this list as conditions evolve. The list is preliminary, and if there are additional items you would like to see included, please email Kelly Papa at kpapa@duncaster.org.