



October 9, 2020

Message to Duncaster Residents and Families

Michael A. O'Brien, President and CEO

Yesterday Dr. Deborah Birx of the White House coronavirus task force traveled to the Northeast because she noted increasing positivity rates and case numbers. During her time in Connecticut she shared her concern about the uptick in COVID-19 cases, noting how more people are becoming infected because of indoor family gatherings and social events. She noted that Connecticut is showing "troubling times" and may be headed towards a coronavirus resurgence. But she also reminded everyone that with proper intervention Connecticut doesn't have to face the same fate as other regions of our country.

In her remarks Birx acknowledged that the kind of spread that is happening now is "very different" from the spread of the coronavirus during March and April. "The spread of the virus is now happening in homes and social occasions and people gathering and taking their mask off and letting down their guard and not physically distancing," said Birx. She repeatedly stressed the need to wear face masks and social distance, as well as more testing for people who have the virus but aren't showing symptoms and can unknowingly spread it. Birx said indoor activities with the heat on are "particularly conducive to spreading events without your mask" and she suggested people increase ventilation with outside air, including cracking a window.

As a result of the recent upticks in Connecticut the Department of Public Health (DPH) is urging residents to stay home if you don't feel well, avoid indoor gatherings with people you don't live with, limit trips outside the home and wear masks anytime you leave your home. DPH also noted that Bloomfield is one of the towns seeing higher numbers over the past two weeks.

With that said I wanted to update you on our current situation and the steps we have taken to address the situation.

Independent Living

On October 3rd we learned that two employees in Dining Services tested positive for COVID-19. Out of an abundance of caution and based upon the Department of Public Health guidelines we closed the kitchen (72 hours) and had it professionally disinfected and sanitized. All Dining staff were sent home on the 5th with the exception of the Dining Room Supervisor who had no contact with the positive employee. All dining staff who had any contact with the positive employee (contact tracing) were tested and fortunately all tested negative. When the dining room was closed for cleaning arrangements were made with local restaurants to provide lunch and dinner and meals were delivered to residents' homes by members of the leadership team on October 3rd and 4th. Dining staff returned on October 5th and regular service was restored.

I am extraordinarily proud of how quickly the leadership team has responded over the past week and the steps we are taking to keep our residents and staff safe and comfortable.

Despite the Pandemic Fatigue we are all experiencing lets heed the wise words of Dr. Birx and remain vigilant and compliant. At this time it is extremely important to contain and prevent any potential spread of COVID-19 in our community. Please remember to wear your mask, wash your hands and practice social distancing.

Be well. Be Safe.