



June 5, 2020

To Our Pelican Valley Senior Living Residents and Family Members:

As we're settling into summer, we hope that you are enjoying the warmer weather and the eventual re-opening of Minnesota based on Governor Walz's recommendations.

Many of you are likely wondering about the re-opening of Pelican Valley Senior Living. **At this time, we are not able to lift any safety precautions or relax any rules for visiting and other group activities at this time due to the high risk of the COVID-19 virus**, which is anticipated to grow in the weeks ahead. We follow the recommendations from the Minnesota Department of Health, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid and the Centers for Disease Control. They are currently developing guidance for us that will inform our re-opening plans using a phased approach. The safety and well-being of our residents and staff is our highest priority. We take this responsibility seriously and at the same time, are attempting to balance the relaxing of some restrictions with our commitment to safety. Please understand this is a difficult time for all concerned and that we will continue to do all that we can to connect our residents and families in a safe way.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released a **Frequent Asked Questions** recently with relevant information for providers of senior living and nursing homes. We thought we would share a few highlights.

When will visitors be allowed in senior living and nursing homes? Continuing to restrict visitation is understandably challenging for families but is necessary in order to protect residents from possible transmission of the virus. Senior living and nursing homes should continue to restrict visitation in general based upon the following recommended guidelines:

- **Phase One:** Visitation is generally prohibited except for compassionate care situations. In those limited situations, visitors are screened and additional precautions are taken, including social distancing, and hand hygiene (e.g., use alcohol-based hand rub upon entry). All visitors wear a cloth face covering or facemask for the duration of their visit.
- **Phase Two:** Due to the elevated risk COVID-19 poses to the health of senior living and nursing home residents, visitation is still generally prohibited, except for compassionate care situations. In those limited situations, visitors are screened and additional precautions are taken, including social distancing, and hand hygiene (e.g., use alcohol-based hand rub upon entry). All visitors wear a cloth face covering or facemask for the duration of their visit.
- **Phase Three:** Visitation allowed with screening and additional precautions including ensuring social distancing and hand hygiene (e.g., use alcohol-based hand rub upon entry). All visitors must a cloth face covering or facemask for the duration of their visit.

Senior living and nursing homes should continue to follow CMS and the Centers for Disease and Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance for preventing the transmission of COVID-19. In addition, they should follow state and local direction. Because senior living and nursing home residents are especially vulnerable, CMS does not recommend opening facilities to visitors (except for compassionate care situations) until Phase Three when:

- there have been no new, onset COVID-19 cases in the facility for 28 days (through phases one and two)
- the senior living and nursing home is not experiencing staff shortages
- there are adequate supplies of personal protective equipment and essential cleaning and disinfection supplies to care for residents
- the senior living and nursing home has adequate access to testing for COVID-19
- Referral hospital(s) have bed capacity on wards and intensive care units

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We are currently operating in **Phase One**. Our team is regularly reviewing recommendations and evaluating the safety precautions that are in place. We will continue to evaluate and provide you with updated information as we receive additional guidance and when we believe we can make modifications to these precautions.

We are awaiting more information from the Minnesota Department of Health on completing **facility-wide testing** of residents and staff. Completing testing will help to identify areas of concern and allow us the ability to better serve those who may need additional care. **We are working to confirm dates when a base-line test will be made available as well as our process to facilitate testing.** Once we know additional details, we will notify you.

Additionally, we are seeking guidance on our best strategy regarding the opening of **beauty salons**. Currently, the Minnesota Department of Health does not deem beauty salons as essential services; however, we recognize the value of receiving these services and are advocating with LeadingAge Minnesota on an advised approach on these services.

Should you experience symptoms such as a cough, fever, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath, muscle aches, headache, new loss of smell or taste, please contact us immediately by calling Tyler Ahlf at 218-863-2991 x27712 or Jordyn Brinkman, Director of Nursing by calling 218-863-2991 x27714, and refrain from leaving your room out of respect to others who reside at Pelican Valley.

We will continue to provide updates to you to keep you informed of our ongoing work. **Please note: This is a fluid situation and updates are in continuous development. Help us keep family and loved ones informed by visiting our website:** <http://pelicanvalleyseniorliving.org/coronavirus/>

Sincerely,
Tyler Ahlf
Executive Director