

Pelican Valley Senior Living COVID-19 Update

Mid-June 2020

An Update on Our Response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19):

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. The safety and well-being of our residents and staff is our highest priority. We have been operating under COVID restrictions for many weeks – and we will need to continue to be until advised by the guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

We continue to move forward with our intention to conduct facility-wide testing for the coronavirus of staff and residents. We believe that by conducting testing of symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals we will have a greater ability to identify any individual who may need additional assistance and implement additional infection control precautions based on our findings. Testing will also allow us the ability to identify areas where there may be any concern and respond accordingly. Testing is an additional component of a broad-based response strategy that includes triage and clinical consultation, infection prevention control measures, resident and staff health screenings among other interventions that have been in place for many weeks. All these considerations must be in place for effectively applying testing to reduce the possibility of transmission. Testing is an integral component of making informed decisions and includes interpreting guidance, using results from testing, statewide and community-reported data among other sources.

At the same time, we are beginning to think about and implement relaxed restrictions related to our beauty salon, visitors, communal dining, activities and more. There is not a 'one size fits all' solution at implementing re-opening guidance, which will be completed in phased approaches, as each building we operate in is in their own unique position. We have a re-opening committee in place to help inform these efforts so that we can attempt to balance the need for opening with the safety concerns and expectations by our health officials. A key step at re-opening is largely based on the ability to test residents and staff to mitigate the spread of COVID. We will continue to be vigilant in all our efforts to protect the safety and well-being of those we serve and our staff as much as possible.

We are working closely to conduct testing at Pelican Valley Senior Living with the Minnesota Department of Health. All follow-up testing will occur based on recommendations from the Minnesota Department of Health. **As of today, there are no active cases of COVID at Pelican Valley Senior Living.**

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 follow CMS and CDC guidance for preventing the transmission of COVID-19 using a three-phased approach. 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 end-of-life 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

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.

Our staff continue to demonstrate their commitment to our mission of enriching lives and their courage in providing quality care. The connections staff make with residents is highly cherished and a privileged benefit in caring for older adults. That is our mission. That is our purpose. And that is what continues to motivate us each and every day in serving you and your loved ones. Thank you for your continued support.

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/>

*Health agencies providing recommendations to us include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, World Health Organization, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, local medical advisors and public health advisors among others.