



April 9, 2020

Residents, Family Members and Neighbors,

We want to update you regarding COVID-19 and its impact on operations. To date, Villages of Lake Highlands has not had any residents or staff members test positive for COVID-19; however, a lot has changed since our last COVID-19 correspondence almost one month ago. Our March 12<sup>th</sup> communication was driven by the first reported case of community spread in Dallas County. That finding triggered the implementation of our COVID-19 action plan, a plan which was developed weeks prior when news first broke of the virus' impact in the greater Seattle area. As of this writing, Dallas County now has over 1,300 reported cases, with likely hundreds if not thousands more asymptomatic cases and symptomatic cases not tested. Furthermore, since our prior correspondence residents and employees in eight long-term care facilities in Dallas County have tested positive. It is against this backdrop that we would like to inform you of our continued COVID-19 mitigation efforts.

While no facility is perfect, we are proud of our clinical team's threat assessment and action plan to date. We have consistently been days or weeks ahead in taking actions subsequently recommended by various agencies to include Centers for Disease Control, Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Texas Department of Health and Human Services, and Dallas County. We remain compliant with prescribed COVID-19 protocols such as no visitors, checking everyone for fever daily, practicing social distancing, and eliminating communal dining and group activities. However, our mitigation effort continues to evolve as more data becomes available. We seek to implement many best practices which go beyond regulatory requirements and the efforts of our peers to enhance the safety and well-being of our residents. Some of the additional measures taken since March 12<sup>th</sup> include:

- It is commonplace for part time staff to work in multiple long-term care facilities; however, effective April 1<sup>st</sup>, Villages of Lake Highlands will no longer employ anyone who works in another long-term care facility.
- We have created a dedicated isolation hall physically divided from other parts of the building. This hall is uniquely staffed with access provided by via a separate entrance. No other personnel are allowed in this area with few exceptions, and anyone who enters must wear the full complement of personal protective equipment.
- While we continue to admit new residents, all new admissions must reside in the isolation hall for 14 days and be COVID-19 symptom free prior to residing in any other areas of the building unless they have had two recent negative COVID-19 tests performed at a local hospital.
- All team members are required to wear facial masks, even staff working in the non-isolation halls.
- All non-essential team members are working from home to limit the number of people in the building.
- Half of our senior nurse managers and essential supervisory staff are working from home while the other half remain on site, and then they rotate every 14 days. We do this to not risk simultaneously exposing our full leadership team which ensures continuity of leadership should an outbreak occur.
- The medical doctors, dietitians, and those providing mental health services who round within the facility are doing as much of their work as possible through telemedicine visits. Our clinical and activities team has become well versed in helping residents embrace the latest technology (Facetime, Google Duo, Zoom Meeting, Skype).
- We currently have robust levels of supplies on hand to include hundreds of gloves and gowns, thousands of masks (including both N95 and surgical masks), and over 100 gallons of hand sanitizer.
- Should an outbreak occur, we will immediately begin notifying all residents and their primary point of contact.



## V I L L A G E S

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The implementation of Shelter in Place and Social Distancing are challenging for everyone, but particularly for our seniors who want little more than to have family and friends visit them. We cannot replicate the love expressed in an in person visit, but we are doing our best to promote our resident's social, emotional, and spiritual welfare.

- We have purchased many additional iPads to add to our existing supply to facilitate as many virtual family interactions as possible. Our activities team works with families seven days a week to facilitate connections; if you need assistance in this regard please reach out to us.
- We have enhanced our television offerings to include the ability to broadcast a movie to all resident rooms. If your loved one would enjoy watching a particular movie, please let us know.
- While we currently prohibit all entertainers from entering the building, we have recently begun videoing our resident's favorite performers and will be regularly broadcasting their performances throughout the building.
- We do have it on good authority that a certain Easter holiday icon will be hopping around the building for our residents to see on Saturday afternoon.

As you have seen in the news media COVID-19 presents an unprecedented global challenge due to the virus' long incubation period, ease of person to person transmission, and the high number of asymptomatic carriers within the general public. Sadly, we have also learned the stakes are highest in skilled nursing than in any other industry due to the inherent vulnerability of our residents. While we cannot guaranty success in preventing the virus from ever entering the building, please know we are attempting to do everything we can think of to keep COVID-19 outside the facility and we reassess our action plan at the end of each day.

We know this season is exceptionally difficult on families when in person visits are not possible. Like you, we are anxious for the crisis to pass and things to return to normal. We look forward to that day of having our full 'Lake Highlands family' all back together in the building with residents, family, guests, and our full team of dedicated care professionals. We do not yet know when that will be, but rest assured we are already planning the celebration.

We sincerely appreciate the confidence you have placed in our team. We take our responsibility most seriously and are honored you have chosen Villages of Lake Highlands for you or your loved one's healthcare needs. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Villages of Lake Highlands Team