



August 31, 2020

Residents, Family Members and Neighbors,

It has been approximately six weeks since we last provided an update on COVID-19 and its impact on our facility and related operations. Contrary to much of our prior correspondence, this is the most upbeat communication we have delivered since the SARS-CoV-2 virus emerged in Dallas County in March 2020. Though we have had a handful of residents and employees test positive for COVID-19, each person was asymptomatic and fully recovered without hospitalization or serious illness. No one who continually remained inside Villages of Lake Highlands contracted the disease. We believe this outcome is the result of strictly adhering to guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control (“CDC”), the Dallas County Health Department (“Dallas County”) and implementing our industry’s best practices.

There has been a great deal of personal sacrifice for the greater good these past six months. We are thankful for our clinical team and other team members who rigorously followed COVID-19 protocols even though they can be uncomfortable and inconvenient. We appreciate those working in our quarantine and COVID-19 areas who prioritized resident’s needs above their own health and safety. We also thank our resident families who played an instrumental role in protecting our residents by remaining outside the facility. We know how difficult it is to be physically separated from your loved one, and hope you find comfort in knowing your sacrifice contributed to our collective success.

Over the past six months we were inspected multiple times by regulatory authorities from the local, state and federal government due to the difficulties our industry has faced across the country. Each inspection found our protocols to be exemplary with no deficiencies were cited. Frequently the facility was lauded for exceeding regulatory requirements related to infection control protocols. Though not a required, the ownership group spent tens of thousands of dollars creating an isolated quarantine wing, a COVID-19 area for convalescing residents, and a separate rehabilitation gym so outpatient therapy clients would not unknowingly bring disease into the facility. The strength of our infection control protocols and physical plant modifications led to the facility receiving a special COVID-19 designation from the Dallas County Health Department. This designation enabled our facility to accept COVID positive residents directly from local hospitals. We are proud to have played a small role in alleviating bed capacity concerns when COVID-19 hospitalizations were spiking in July and early August. As of Friday, August 28th our last COVID-19 resident was safely discharged home. Currently there are no known COVID-19 cases in the building. We continue to accept new admissions into our quarantine wing, and as we have seen in the past it remains possible that a quarantined resident may subsequently produce a positive test, though all have produced at least one and typically two negative tests prior to admission.

Despite this progress, we remain concerned that the disease continues to permeate the community. The Dallas County positivity rate is 12.1%, with rates above 10% considered high. Because of the elevated positivity rate within Dallas County the federal government now requires all employees of nursing facilities within the county to be tested twice per week until the positivity rate declines below 10%, at which time employee testing will decrease to once



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per week. This mandatory employee testing is being implemented across the country based on each county's positivity rate and should hopefully minimize future COVID-19 outbreaks within nursing facilities.

Notwithstanding Dallas' high positivity rate, there is good news. There has been a dramatic decrease in COVID-19 hospitalizations over the past thirty days. Hospitalizations are now on par with levels last seen in late May to early June. We attribute this to requirements in most commercial establishments to wear masks and maintain social distancing. These precautions combined with sheltering in place were largely adopted by seniors and other vulnerable citizens which led to a decline in area hospitalizations. While we await the impact the back to school season may have on community spread, we are encouraged by the recent progress.

Noting our facility is once again without any COVID-19 cases, seeing progress with area hospitalizations, and in accordance with recently updated state regulations, we will begin socially distanced dining for residents in the main dining room in the coming weeks. Furthermore, we will also begin limited activities for our residents outside of their resident rooms. Any new programming will strictly follow guidelines established by the CDC, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services ("CMS"), the Texas State Department of Health and Human Services Commission ("HHSC"), and Dallas County, and will be closely monitored by our leadership team. We feel this will be a welcomed and refreshing change for our residents and should enhance their quality of life. Additionally, though we have not yet been cleared to do so by Dallas County and HHSC, we are beginning to explore ways in which we may facilitate in person resident family and guest visitations. We do not anticipate visits within the facility for the foreseeable future as we strive to keep all residents safe. However, assuming there are no major adverse COVID-19 changes within the community or our facility, and assuming we are allowed to do so by regulatory authorities, we look forward to conducting outside visitation under appropriate safety measures in the future. We will provide additional information at a later date as we obtain the necessary approvals and establish our COVID-19 outdoor visitation protocols.

We appreciate your continued support and the role you have played in assisting us in keeping all residents safe. We are grateful and blessed with our health outcomes thus far. Should you have questions or concerns regarding our COVID-19 policies and protocols, please contact Executive Director Kelly Wolfe or Chelsea Sneed, Director of Nursing.

Villages of Lake Highlands Team