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March 16, 2020

Dear Residents, Families and Staff:

Good Afternoon,

We wanted to provide an update to all of you regarding the revised guidance for Infection Control and Prevention of COVID-19/Coronavirus. On March 13, 2020 CMS provided additional guidance to nursing homes to help them improve their infection control and prevention practices to prevent the transmission of COVID-19, including revised guidance for visitation.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is responsible for ensuring the health and safety of nursing home residents by enforcing the standards required to help each resident attain or maintain their highest level of well-being.

Additional revised guidance:

1. Cancel communal dining and all group activities, such as internal and external group activities. We will provide additional Vivage guidance on communal dining and group activities.
2. Implement active screening of residents and staff for fever and respiratory symptoms.
3. Remind residents to practice social distancing and perform frequent hand hygiene.
4. Screen all staff at the beginning of their shift for fever and respiratory symptoms. Actively take their temperature and document absence of shortness of breath, new or change in cough, and sore throat. If they are ill, have them put on a facemask and self-isolate at home.
5. For individuals allowed in the facility (e.g., in end-of-life situations), provide instruction, before visitors enter the facility and residents' rooms, provide instruction on hand hygiene, limiting surfaces touched, and use of PPE according to current facility policy while in the resident's room. Individuals with fevers, other symptoms of COVID-19, or unable to demonstrate proper use of infection control techniques should be restricted from entry.
6. Facilities should identify staff that work at multiple facilities (e.g., agency staff, regional or corporate staff, etc.) and actively screen and restrict them appropriately to ensure they do not place individuals in the facility at risk for COVID-19.
7. Advise visitors, and any individuals who entered the facility (e.g., hospice staff), to monitor for signs and symptoms of respiratory infection for at least 14 days after exiting the facility. If symptoms occur, advise them to self-isolate at home, contact their healthcare provider, and immediately notify the facility of the date they were in the facility, the individuals they were in contact with, and the locations within the facility they visited. Facilities should immediately screen the individuals of reported contact, and take all necessary actions based on findings.

I know these are challenging times for everyone, we appreciate your cooperation and understanding during this time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Moskowitz', written over a horizontal line.

Jay Moskowitz,
President of Wellage Senior Communities