



May 4, 2020

To Family Members and Friends:

We are thankful to report that currently our facility remains without any positive COVID Residents. Our goal from the start of this Pandemic has been to provide continual communication to help ease any concerns with what is happening as it relates to COVID-19. We have received guidance from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) regarding communication to families and we always want to be compliant. As a result, we are providing this COVID-19 Emergency Preparedness Packet.

Our parent company, Ide Management Group, developed the COVID-19 Emergency Preparedness Packet as an educational tool to ensure our families have all the information they may need as it relates to COVID-19. Majority of the information provided has already been shared through our weekly family letters, Facebook pages, and facility website. This packet puts the information in one place allowing easy access as concerns or questions may come to mind.

This letter and packet contain a lot of information and during these challenging times, we would prefer to overcommunicate with our Residents and families. You may access the entire COVID-19 Emergency Preparedness Packet at <https://imgcares.com/covid19-emergency-preparedness>.

Below are a few items we want to highlight:

- **Masks for Residents** – We will be providing two washable masks for each Resident. The masks will be worn if a Resident leaves their room or if staff is providing care as another layer of protection. You are welcome to provide masks for your loved one. We just ask the masks be cloth, preferably cotton, washable, elastic and properly labeled. Tie masks are difficult for our Residents to maneuver and we will not be utilizing them. We understand Residents may refuse or be unable to comprehend keeping the mask on. We will continue to educate and offer the mask.
- **COVID-19 Unit** – Even though we currently do NOT have a positive case of COVID-19 in the facility, out of an abundance of caution, we have set up a separate COVID unit in the facility. If the need to operate a COVID positive unit becomes necessary, you will be notified.
- **Contact Droplet Precautions** – Contact droplet precautions means all staff, caring for Residents, will be in full protective gear including masks, eye protection, gowns and gloves. All new admissions/readmissions are automatically placed on contact droplet precautions out of abundance of caution. If a new admission/readmission does not show any signs or symptoms of COVID, they will be removed from droplet precautions after 14 days. ER visits will also go on contact droplet precautions. Any current Residents in the facility, who may exhibit signs and symptoms of COVID, are also placed on contact droplet precautions until further guidance from state and local health departments for testing is verified.
- **COVID Status for Employees** – In accordance with local and state departments of health's guidance and the CDC, we continue to screen every employee before entering the workplace. Any employee who does not pass our screening is not allowed to work and is required to self-quarantine. Please see attached our Employee Return to Work Protocol. Due to our strict screening guidelines, staffing can and has at times been challenging as we do not want symptomatic employees working. We have set up contracts with multiple staffing agencies in our community in the event the additional support is needed.

- **Asymptomatic Carriers** – We continue to learn that Residents and/ or staff can be asymptomatic carriers of the coronavirus. Asymptomatic carrier is defined as a person who test positive for COVID yet exhibits no symptoms. This makes preventing the virus from entering a facility challenging.
- **Testing for COVID** – If we have Residents and/or staff that display symptoms of the COVID virus, we will contact the local and/or state health departments for guidance on testing. Due to a nationwide shortage of test kits, the local and state health departments are determining who we will test.
- **COVID Concerns Line** – We have set up a COVID Concern telephone number in the facility in addition to the main facility phone number. This phone number will be operable, during the weekday, from 9am to 11am and 2pm to 6pm. The new number is 217-246-0241. Please know if your loved one or any Resident or staff member becomes COVID positive, we will contact you. We ask for patience and to leave a message if you do not get someone right away. Our staff are working tirelessly to be all hands-on deck for our Residents during this difficult time.
- **Safekeeping App** – You should have all received information regarding the Safekeeping App. This is a free service to our families and a valuable communication tool. It is fully HIPAA compliant allowing your loved one’s health information to remain secure. This application is now our primary form of communication for COVID updates, changes or notifications instead of mailing weekly letters. We will **only** be sending updates through Safekeeping to the first point of contact listed on your loved one’s face sheet. The emergency contact will be responsible for sharing the app or any information provided by the app to other family members. You can always encourage additional friends and family members to read updates on our facility website and Facebook pages as well.
- **Daily Updates** – We are now required to report, each weekday, COVID statistics for both Residents and employees. You will get a notice through our Safekeeping App by close of business each weekday. You will receive the first notice on Tuesday, May 5th. Because we currently do NOT have any COVID positive Residents or employees, these numbers will be zero. Please note if we were to have a confirmed positive COVID Resident or confirmed positive COVID staff member, you will be notified by phone. If you choose not to participate in the Safekeeping App, we will utilize other forms of communication to update you such as mailed letters or phone calls.
- **Visitor Restrictions** – Even as our state begins lifting their stay at home orders, we must continue to maintain current restrictions on visitors. CMS released clear guidance, back in March, to restrict visitors and nonessential personnel, as well as restrict communal dining and activities. We will follow the CMS guidance on restrictions until new guidance is received.
- **Our Residents Need You** – Family contact is vital to keep the spirits of our Residents lifted. You can stay in close contact with your loved one through telephone calls, window visits, emails, texts, ecards, video chat or social media. You may also drop off care packages, cards, pictures, etc. as well. We ask you contact the facility ahead of time to let us know you are coming. A team member, with a mask on, will meet you outside to collect the items for your loved one.

Thank you for continuing to entrust the care of your loved one to us! We will continue to follow CDC and state and local guidance, updating our protocols as needed, to ensure care and safety remains our number one priority. Our mission of Residents First, Employees Always will remain clear as we battle this Pandemic.

At Your Service,

Alicia Wilson, Administrator