

06/29/2020

Dear Residents, Families, Friends, Volunteers and Staff,

There are a couple of CMS (Center for Medicare and Medicaid) and State requirements that we want to clarify. The **first requirement** is the notification whenever there is 3 or more residents or staff that have respiratory symptoms in the last 72 hours. The **second requirement** is mandatory COVID-19 testing in U.S. nursing homes. The 72-hour notification is based on presence of symptoms, the testing mandate is based on absence of symptoms.

### **Notification of Respiratory Symptoms and Confirmed or Presumed COVID-19**

This notification is required by CMS so that residents and families are aware of any respiratory illness in the building. It also requires us to notify you if there is a confirmed or presumed COVID-19 case in the facility. This requirement started in May, 2020.

So far, we have chosen to use Solution Reach to notify families of respiratory symptoms, and a personal call to notify you of confirmed or presumed COVID-19. We are working on a system that will leave a voicemail notification of respiratory symptoms or COVID-19. These messages are non-specific, they will go to everyone. If your loved one is ill, COVID-19 or otherwise, we will follow our usual process of calling you directly.

While we work on a new system, you will continue to receive notification of *respiratory symptoms* in the facility via text. Because three different people within 72 hours had a symptom that could indicate a respiratory infection, CMS requires us to send out notification.

Here is an example of what would trigger that notification:

Day 1: A staff member arrives for screening prior to work and reports that she has congestion due to seasonal allergies.

Day 2: A resident develops a temperature of 99.

Day 3: A staff member calls the Employee Hotline and reports a sore throat.

*Our processes for this particular scenario: The staff member with allergies and the staff member with a sore throat are both prohibited from entering the building until cleared of infectious disease by Employee Health. The resident would be evaluated promptly for signs of infection, respiratory or otherwise and family would be notified of the change in condition. If it is thought to be a respiratory infection, the resident would be placed in isolation.*

## **Mandatory Testing for Nursing Home Residents and Staff**

CMS and the State of Wyoming requires regular testing of staff and residents in nursing homes. This is designed to identify those with COVID-19 infection but do not know it because they do not have symptoms. Our screening processes have been strong, allowing us to identify the early signs of infection and stop transmission. However, only testing will identify those who are infected without the tell-tale symptoms.

The recent COVID-19 cases that were associated with Legacy were not announced in the 72-hour notification because there were no symptoms. Instead, we personally called every family and updated every resident so that we could answer questions and describe the testing plan issued by the State.

## **Our Commitment**

- We are committed to avoiding exposure and preventing transmission of infections. We are diligent in maintaining the processes that protect them. We are also committed to following the regulatory mandates, as they are designed to protect nursing homes.
- Our staff are committed to meet all expectations: families, residents, volunteers and the regulatory agencies.
- We are committed to meeting the psychosocial, emotional and physical needs for your loved one.

## **What can you do to help us?**

- Please continue to encourage the community to social distance, wear masks, and wash hands. There are national and state requirements for nursing homes to reopen, and a major one is reduction of COVID-19 infection rates in our community. If community rates rise, with or without symptoms, it will delay our

ability to reopen even if Legacy is COVID-19 free. As you listen to the news, COVID-19 cases are rising all over the country and in Gillette.

**Currently the Legacy has returned to Phase One which includes the following:**

- The definition of an asymptomatic positive means a positive COVID-19 test (virus is in high enough numbers to be detected) but no respiratory symptoms or fever.
- No visitors with exception of compassionate end of life visits, no communal dining, no large group activities greater than 25 people 6 feet apart, essential medical appointments only, all residents wear cloth masks while out of room.
- Residents are to wear procedure masks to all appointments including dialysis and medical appointments.
- Any resident who is admitted to the hospital or ER will be on 14 day isolation upon their return to the facility.
- 100% Staff are temperature tested and respiratory screened twice a shift and Residents receive the same screening daily.
- You may hear the term universal source control. This means 100% of staff are wearing procedure masks at all times while working with exception of eating or drinking. This also means in the event you are allowed to visit residents through a fence visit when we resume them, you must wear a mask at all times. Failure to wear a mask will result in the visit being terminated and the resident will unfortunately have to be in isolation due to the fact we are unable to ensure there has been no exposure
- All staff and residents at the Legacy are required to be tested based on positive Covid-19 test.
  - Positive asymptomatic staff will not be allowed to work for 14 days
  - Any positive asymptomatic residents will be in 14 day isolation.
  - Any resident or family member who refuses to allow their resident to be tested will result in the resident being in 14 day isolation as well as they will be presumed positive. I respect your right to refuse, however I encourage you to ask questions prior to refusing, as this will only delay the process and be detrimental in the long run.
  - Any positive test will result in return to the most stringent restrictions.
- Currently all new admissions to the Legacy are tested twice at least 24 hours apart prior to admission and are in 14 day isolation to minimize any opportunity for exposure.









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- We do have a designated isolation space in the event we have positive results in our facility and we need to put more than one positive resident in an area.

**Where are we at right now in regards to reopening, understanding that all categories must be in a green status prior to moving to the next stage**

- Case status in community: 
- Case status in the nursing home: 
- Adequate staffing: 
- Access to adequate testing: 
- Access to PPE (personal protective equipment): 
- Hospital capacity in the community: 
- **Nursing Homes should spend 14 days in each phase with no new nursing home onset of symptomatic or asymptomatic COVID-19 cases prior to advancing to next phase per Centers for Medicare and Medicaid.**

**What does the next stage look like when all categories are in green status?**

- Resume outdoor visitation (fence visits) with same rules
- Resume communal dining one resident at a table, 6 feet apart
- Continue no visitation in building other than compassionate care visiting per CMS guidelines
- Continue personal item deliveries that can be cleaned.
- Group activities with social distancing (occurring currently due to negative testing among residents)

Thank you for trusting us to care for your loved one. We understand how very difficult this season has been for all of you.

*Jonni Belden*



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Please be patient, we have a large volume of calls currently and you may be put on hold or have to call back.

i. Phone numbers for your reference

- Legacy Main number 307-688-7000
- Jonni Belden Administrator 307-688-7112
- Kate Craig AD Director of Nursing 307-688-7117
- Aspen Ave 307-688-7133
- Birch Blvd. 307-688-7118
- Cottonwood/Pine Nurse Station 307-688-7147
- Cottonwood Court 307-688-7115
- Pine Place 307-688-7116
- Rehab Nursing Station 307-688-7164
- Spruce Street 307-688-7119
- Julie Mason 307-688-7131
  - a. (Social Worker for Cottonwood, Pine and Birch)
- Toni Atwell 307-688-7121
  - a. (Social Worker for Spruce, Rehab and Aspen)
- Tiffany Fager Admin Secretary 307-688-7156