



ADIRONDACK HEALTH

DEPARTMENT: Mercy Living Center - Administration	POLICY TITLE: Communication with Family/Representatives/Community (Temporary COVID-19 Plan)
PAGE 1 of 2	REPLACES POLICY DATED:
EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/2020	POLICY NUMBE/R:
APPROVED Dave Mader, AH Chief Nursing Officer	PREPARED BY: Madaline Toliver, Administrator/AVP Long Term Care
SIGNED:	DATED:

DISTRIBUTION: All Mercy Living Center Departments.

PURPOSE:

To keep residents and families/representatives connected, to continue to promote and enhance quality of life during this healthcare emergency and to minimize social isolation and loneliness as many experience in congregate care. To notify family/representatives for all residents if any resident tests positive for COVID-19, or if any resident suffers a COVID-19 related death.

POLICY:

Mercy Living Center is committed to meeting the psychosocial needs of all residents, including their emotional and physical well-being, self-determination, self-respect and dignity, during this public health emergency and will utilize virtual visits to meet these needs whenever possible.

- Ensure residents stay connected to their families/representatives and communities
- Ensure communications with residents about COVID
- Notify residents and families/representatives about a suspected or positive test result of staff or another resident
- Notify family members or next of kin for all residents if any resident tests positive for COVID-19, or if any resident suffers a COVID-19 related death, within 24 hours of such positive test result or death.
- Enabling connections for enjoyment

PROCEDURE:

Residents are encouraged to maintain connection to the community via virtual visits. All staff will support communication efforts for each resident as appropriate.

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Resident connection with family/community:

Some residents own their own laptop, cellphone, grandpad, etc. and can communicate with those in the community independently. Those who cannot or who wish to utilize a different mode of communication are assisted by Activity staff, the Social Worker, or other available staff.

Family/representatives of residents without a communication device are instructed to contact the Unit Secretaries to schedule any of the below type visit:

1. Limited in-person visitation – See Visitation Policy
2. Window visits – See Visitation Policy
3. WebEx or Zoom visits via laptop or other devices
4. Calls/Facetime calls (some residents have their own device)

Other pluses:

Community support of the residents:

- Postcards – From volunteer writers to residents on the Organization’s website. The postcards are sent to internal staff who print and post them
- Some family members are making cards for other residents
- A community farm provides fresh flowers for the residents

Facility communication with family/representative

Facility communication with family/representatives is via the organizations website, email, and conventional (snail) mail.

- Organization website – Posts of community and general COVID-19 information provided to the public.
- **Administrator Message** – Information from the *Desk of the Administrator* to resident family/representatives and Ombudsman to provide information/education about COVID-19, how services may change, and avenues Mercy is taking to close the gap.
- **Mercy Messenger Newsletter** – A newsletter sent to families/representatives/Ombudsman and provided to all residents every 4-6 weeks. The newsletter includes pictures of the resident activities, information and encouragements from staff, etc.

Notification of suspected or positive test result of staff or another resident.

Within 24 hours of receiving a positive test result, the infected resident would be notified by the RN Manager/designee or the Medical Director. Notification to the individual’s family/representative would be communicated via telephone by the RN Manager/designee or Medical Director. Subsequent conversations, daily or otherwise, about health status and care, would be directed by the RN Manager and Social Worker, and would include discussions with the Medical Director. The resident, family and interdisciplinary team (IDT) in Resident Care Conference would discuss change in status and how best to address both medical and psychosocial issues and appropriateness of services provided.

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Notification to the other residents would be within 24 hours and via resident meetings on each unit, to include some conversations in resident rooms. Notification to their families/representatives would be made by email and telephone calls. Notification of the result as well as the steps the facility will take to address spread will be posted on the organizations website and will also indicate new cases, in accordance with current regulation.

Notification of resident positive COVID-19 test result, or if any resident suffers a COVID-19 related death, within 24 hours of such positive test result or death.

- a. Family/next of kin/HCP of the specific resident will be notified by telephone.
- b. All residents will be notified via resident meetings and written notification.
- c. Family and representatives would be notified via email and telephone calls if any resident of a positive test result, or if any resident suffers a COVID-19 related death.
- d. The nurse manager or social worker will provide daily communication, via telephone, with updates on status and other needs to the family of a resident with a positive COVID-19 test result.
- e. The organizations website would be utilized to provide daily updates of the numbers of positive cases/deaths, until all positive cases are resolved.

Enabling connections for enjoyment

To support resident engagement with regular entertainers and to explore other avenues of connectivity, Activity staff regularly utilize:

- WebEx
- Facebook Messenger streaming to TV to offer and connect with our entertainers so that they can stream live.
- Entertainers – Purchase via *YouTube* entertainment packages made specifically for Mercy residents.
- Utilization of websites to stream movie viewing and programming such live animal webcam for pet therapy and religious programs.
- We constantly explore new avenues made available.

End of Procedure

REFERENCES: <i>Reference to all applicable laws, rules, regulations and standards.</i>		
FEDERAL LAW, NEW YORK STATE LAW, JCAHO STANDARD Executive Order 202.18 Executive Order 202.19 NYS DOH Nursing Home Advisory; DAL C20-01		
REVIEWED BY:	TITLE :	DATE: