

Resident Representatives,

We recognize the importance of social distancing and physical separation to help keep our residents and staff safe from exposure to COVID-19 and understand the unintended consequences of prolonged social distancing and isolation on a resident's overall health and well-being.

The Minnesota Department of Health is now permitting long-term care settings to institute an Essential Caregiver program that would allow designated individuals to provide care and support to their loved one. This program is a recommendation, not a mandate or a requirement. Good Shepherd Lutheran Services has worked diligently to keep COVID-19 out of our community and we are proud of our diligent efforts to prevent, control and mitigate this deadly virus in our setting.

In an effort to remain COVID-19 free Good Shepherd Lutheran Services will not be initiating the Essential Caregiver program at this time. We will continue to actively monitor the presence of COVID-19 in our setting and the bordering communities and will reassess our decision on a weekly basis to decide when we can safely implement Essential Caregivers in our setting. In the meantime, we continue to offer a variety of visitation options for families and loved ones as well as safe, socially-distanced activities to keep our residents engaged and connected.

Other factors Good Shepherd Lutheran Services has taken into account are concerns that have happened during some of our outdoor visits and window visits. This does not happen often, however, we have had to intervene when we see visitors are not respecting the 6 ft. distancing, have opened resident windows from the outside, passed items through the window (definitely not 6ft. apart), pass items back and forth during an outdoor visit and even had someone quickly give a hug before staff could intervene. There are also concerns regarding the increasing number of cases surrounding our area.

KEY MESSAGES

Protect People. Provide Access.

- We understand the unintended consequences of prolonged social distancing and isolation on a resident's overall health and well-being, while we also recognize the importance of social distancing and physical separation to help keep our residents and staff safe from exposure to COVID-19
- We have worked diligently to keep COVID-19 out of our setting, and are pleased that no known COVID-19 exposures have occurred.
- In our goal and diligent efforts to remain COVID-19 free, we are taking a cautious approach in modifying our policies about who can enter our building.
- To protect the health and safety of our residents, we will not be implementing an Essential Caregiver program at this time.
- We are actively monitoring the presence of COVID-19 in our community and want to minimize the risk of COVID-19 exposures in our setting. At the heart of our decision will always be the health and safety of our residents.
- We will routinely review our decision based on the following criteria: COVID-19 exposures in our setting and current COVID-19 status, community COVID-19 exposures, statewide and national COVID-19 trends, expert advice, and guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance.
- We do understand the purpose and value of the Essential Caregiver program and will be continuing to address concerns of prolonged physical separation and isolation on our resident's health and well-being in the following ways:

- Virtual visits: call 507-864-7714 to set up a time
- Window visits:
 - visitors and resident must both wear a mask during open window visits
 - 6ft. distancing must be maintained during open window visits
 - Screen must remain closed at all times – please do not pass items back and forth through the window
 - If the resident is up by the open window, visitors must stay behind the yellow 6 ft. distancing line in the grass
- Outside visits:
 - Tuesday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
 - Wednesday: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
 - Thursday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
 - Friday: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
 - Sunday: 1 p.m. to 3 p.m ~ Reminder deadline to schedule Sunday visits is by 3pm Friday.
- Compassionate care visits: Protocol that we currently only implement when a resident is passing. Please read over our policy/procedure below.

Compassionate Care/End of life Visits

To allow families to spend time with their loved ones during end of life and/or special circumstances that support their individual physical and psychosocial wellbeing during that time.

Visitors:

- Must be screened prior to entry. **Front main entrance only per MDH
 - Staff must be the one to check their temperature
 - Staff must observe them apply hand sanitizer
 - Staff must ask each question on the screening form **If they answer yes to any of the symptoms etc., unfortunately they are not allowed to visit*
 - Staff must educate the visitor to wash hands frequently, minimize movement in the facility, limit their interactions with employees and other residents and to keep their mask on at all times
- 2 visitors shall be allowed in the room at a time.
 - Only adult children, their spouses and other close immediate family – contact the Case Manager with questions
- Not on Quarantine: Mask must be worn
 - Staff must escort the visitor directly to the resident's room
 - Staff must escort the visitor from the resident's room back out of the facility.

- Instruct family to put the call light on when they are ready to leave
- Staff must observe the visitor use hand sanitizer when leaving the room
- If the resident is on Quarantine: Mask upon entry into the facility.
 - Staff must escort the visitor directly to the resident's room
 - Face shield, gown and gloves must be applied prior to entering the resident's room. Staff must remain present to observe proper donning technique every time
 - CDC donning/doffing posters to be posted to instruct families of proper technique
 - Staff must observe the visitor remove PPE in the proper order and escort them out of the facility
 - Remove gloves
 - Apply hand sanitizer
 - Remove gown by rolling it into itself and placing in the laundry basket in the room
 - Apply hand sanitizer
 - Step out of the room, remove face shield and sanitize thoroughly
- During the time of anticipated imminent death, up to 3 immediate family members shall be allowed in to be present at the time of their passing. 1 hour time limit.

Visitor Don'ts

- No food or drink – face mask must be kept on at all times. Do not offer food, lunch, beverages to families.
- Not allowed to wait in the lobby or walk unattended through the facility
- Not to use facility restrooms (They can use the bathroom in their loved one's room only)
- Not to open the screen/pass things in/out of the room

Window

- Open: when not on quarantine

- Family/visitors outside must stay behind the 6 ft. line and wear a mask. If it works better to have family closer to the window, staff can arrange the bed/resident to be 6 feet in from the window. End goal is to maintain 6ft. distance between the resident/visitor.
- Dying resident does not need to have a mask put on them
- Screen must be kept close
- Closed: locked and *Secured shut if on quarantine. Inform maintenance to secure window lock.
 - Note: There may be extenuating circumstances which results in the resident's window being allowed to be open at the discretion of the management team

Stay safe,

Good Shepherd Lutheran Services