



TO: PMMA Residents, Family Members and Visitors
FROM: Bruce H. Shogren, President/CEO
CC: PMMA Board of Trustees, PMMA Senior Leadership
RE: COVID-19 Update – “**STAY THE COURSE**” – ***Absolute Bearing***
DATE: June 2, 2020

Absolute Bearing – the bearing of an object in relation to the True North.

In this case, **True North** for PMMA means the best course for keeping you and/or your loved ones safe and healthy.

In this unprecedented time, it is difficult to understand how the federal, state, and local governments are addressing the reopening for our senior living communities. Believe me, it has been a very frustrating and confusing game of “**Wait and See**” for all senior living providers in determining which governing authority is responsible for reopening guidance and plans. What we do know is that on May 18, 2020, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Centers (CMS) issued a memorandum entitled “*Nursing Home Reopening Recommendations for State and Local Officials*”. In the memorandum, CMS passed the formulation of any reopening plans onto State and local officials but they also provided “recommendations” on limiting the COVID-19 exposure in nursing homes to those State and local officials.

So PMMA is now waiting for the State and/or local officials in Kansas and Missouri to issue their own reopening plans. It is our understanding that the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services is working on the reopening plan for Missouri. In Kansas, the Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services was originally tasked with coming up with the reopening plan for Kansas but with the actions of the Kansas legislature and the Kansas Governor last week, we are unsure of who is currently responsible for a Kansas reopening plan.

If you are not confused yet, let me add one more confusing layer to this story/game. The reopening plan for nursing centers will look different from the reopening of businesses in Kansas and Missouri that has and is already happening. Why? Because nursing homes remain under the CMS March 13 Guidelines of “Limited” access. Those March 13 Guidelines will remain in effect until CMS releases nursing homes from those guidelines and we meet the requirements in the reopening plans for Kansas and Missouri. That means we “Stay the Course” for a while longer and, thus, **remain in the current state of highest restriction or “Limited” status**, even when the greater community begins to relax restrictions for other businesses. **Unfortunately, the guidelines also stipulate nursing centers be among the last to reopen, within the greater community, to ensure safety of the residents.**

A very brief summary of the CMS “recommendations” include the following factors: COVID-19 status in the greater surrounding community and the nursing home itself; adequate staffing; access to adequate testing for both residents and staff; access to adequate personal protective equipment (PPE); and local hospital capacity. In addition, CMS is recommending a three phase approach with each phase being 14 days in length. Phase 1 would begin with a baseline test of all residents and staff. All residents and staff must have a negative COVID-19 test and be COVID free for 14 days in order to

COVID-19 Update – “STAY THE COURSE” Continues

June 2, 2020

Page 2 of 2

move to the next phase. Through the first two phases, communities would remain on “Limited” access to visitors except for end of life situations. In the third phase, communities could begin allowing visitation with strict screening of visitors for fever and illness prior to admittance and adherence to wearing masks, social distancing, and hand hygiene. I do want to stress these are the current recommendations from CMS and the final reopening plans for Kansas and Missouri are still forthcoming.

Unfortunately, PMMA has not been immune to the COVID-19 virus, over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, the PMMA System has had over 375 employees miss work for reasons related to the COVID-19 virus either due to quarantine from exposure, illness or leave of absence. Of our over 2,100 employees, only 10 employees have had a confirmed Positive test for the COVID-19 virus. The weekly average for the PMMA System is over 40 employees missing work due to the COVID-19 virus. The good news is our screening at the beginning of each shift and our protocols to not work or go home if you are not feeling well or have any signs or symptoms have identified substantially most of the employees who have missed work. These procedures have kept our residents without a positive COVID-19 test until recently. Since my last letter to you dated May 15, PMMA has had two residents at two different locations test positive for the COVID-19 virus. Those residents are currently in isolation and neither one has shown any signs or symptoms. At the direction of each local health department, we are testing all nursing and assisted living residents and all staff in those 2 locations this week. The health departments have given different (confusing) directions for independent living residents, with all being tested at one location and a voluntary test for the other location.

There are many factors to consider as we put our reopening plans in place but as I said before, we will manage the reopening phases in the same cautious and caring manner to ensure **our residents’ health and safety remains our first priority especially with the first two positive cases of the COVID-19 virus now being confirmed in our PMMA System during the past two weeks.**

As I write this letter, the PMMA Senior Leadership Team, Regional Directors of Operations, Nursing and Marketing, and our Executive Directors have been refining PMMA’s own reopening plans in hopes that we have anticipated what the states’ guidance will require. Our plan will be by level of living (independent, assisted and nursing) and will be based upon the impact of the COVID-19 virus upon the greater communities we are located in. It will also comply with the reopening plans issued by the States of Kansas and Missouri.

As I stated above, this is a very confusing time, which makes it even more important to have absolute bearing in not wavering from doing the right thing and in keeping our residents safe and COVID free. It took all of us – residents, families and staff members – to work together to keep our residents safe over the past two and a half months. Happily, we have heard from many of our residents throughout the PMMA system that they are very thankful for keeping them safe and healthy during this pandemic.

When we actually receive the reopening plans for Kansas and Missouri, we will work to keep you updated as quickly as possible, In the meantime, please accept my sincerest appreciation and gratitude for your continued patience, understanding and prayers.

*For God is not the author of confusion,
but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.*

1 Corinthians 14:33

God’s Blessings,



Bruce H. Shogren
President/CEO