



MEDIA STATEMENT

May 1, 2020

PMMA announces continued adherence to CMS guidelines for COVID-19 prevention

WICHITA- Kan.—The safety of our residents and staff is our most important priority for PMMA (Presbyterian Manors of Mid-America). Despite the lifting of statewide stay-at-home orders in both Kansas and Missouri on May 4, PMMA communities will continue to follow the guidance provided by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to ensure resident and staff safety.

“There is going to be a challenge in the next several weeks for the employees, residents, family members and visitors of the PMMA system, as both Kansas and Missouri start re-opening business and social activities beginning next Monday, May 4,” said Bruce Shogren, president and CEO for PMMA. “I will note that both of the new orders by Missouri and Kansas specify that individuals shall not visit nursing homes, long-term care facilities, retirement homes, or assisted living homes unless to provide critical assistance or in end-of-life circumstances.”

Since March 13, 2020, per CMS guidance, in-person visitation has been strictly limited at all PMMA communities. **Limited access** means all visits to the community must be rescheduled **except in case of end-of-life situations.** These exceptions will be determined on a case-by-case basis with careful screening of the potential visitor(s).

Independent living residents continue to be strongly advised to adhere to the no visitor “rule,” and limit the number of medically non-essential appointments, events, gatherings attended off campus. We ask independent living residents shelter in place in respect to the other residents who are at a higher risk due to underlying health issues.

CMS guidelines have also discontinued group activities and communal meals for infection prevention. Residents are encouraged to practice social distancing, staying 6-feet away from one another. Residents may walk the halls or visit community amenities such as the library or fitness equipment so long as they are able to practice social distancing.

Families should communicate with their loved one via telephone, email or other electronic methods. Communities are scheduling video calls between residents and their families using FaceTime, Skype and Zoom. To schedule a time to visit with a family member, call your local community.

Letters and packages may be sent to residents at the communities through USPS, UPS, FedEx and DHL. All packages are quarantined for three days, so perishable items should not be sent.

Visitors who meet the end-of-life exception are screened for entry to the community. Screening includes answering a questionnaire about recent travel, health status and exposure risk, and temperatures will be taken and logged before being allowed to enter into the community.

Visitors are expected to follow good hand washing practices and coughing/sneezing etiquette. In addition, movement in the community will be limited to the resident's room, and social distance recommendations are in place strictly limiting physical contact.

Personal protective equipment (PPE), which includes gloves, masks and gowns, are available **as necessary**.

Staff members are instructed not to come to work if they are experiencing symptoms of illness including having a temperature and especially respiratory illnesses.

Employees are screened at the beginning of each shift at the point of entry to the community building and before employees have any direct contact with residents. These screening measures include taking staff temperatures and asking a set of questions about travel, health status, COVID-19 exposure risks and reviews a list of possible COVID-19 symptoms. Employees who have a fever or report feeling unwell are not allowed to work and are asked to get tested for COVID-19 if they have symptoms of the disease. These measures have been in place since March 13 and continue to be updated as guidance changes.

Every PMMA community has an infection prevention specialist, who completed specific training in infection prevention through nationally accredited infectious disease programs.

Each team member completes:

- An Infection Control course during onboarding orientation and then annually;
- An annual workplace emergency course (a pandemic is considered an emergency situation);
- A Blood Borne Pathogen course, which includes many of the same concepts as infection control (proper hand hygiene, use of gloves, etc.).

Each community's emergency response plan addresses pandemic situations. These plans are based on CDC and CMS guidelines. PMMA's dedicated Plant Operations and Housekeeping teams will continue to work diligently to ensure our community is clean, safe and disinfected regularly.

PMMA's mission to provide quality senior services guided by Christian values does not stop, even in the midst of pandemic. We will continue to provide care to seniors, including those who have outlived their financial resources through no fault of their own. You can shine a light during this time by supporting PMMA residents with a tax-deductible gift at www.Giving.PresbyterianManors.org.

PMMA's 16 communities and two hospices are accepting donations of homemade fabric masks and isolation gowns.

Fabric masks should be made of 100% cotton material and be different patterns on the front and back so the wearer can tell which one they had to their face. The masks may be held on with elastic or fabric ties as elastic may be in short supply. There are many free facemask patterns available online. Here is an example: <https://freesewing.org/blog/facemask-frenzy/>

Reusable gowns that suit our needs should be made of polyester or polyester-cotton fabrics, or cotton with plastic or waterproof lining that can be safely laundered and re-used. They should be long-sleeved and come below the knee of the person wearing them. They should close in back with ties or snaps. Fabrics that do not repel water can be waterproofed, but that spray must be reapplied after each washing. Patterns for isolation gowns are available online. Choose one that fits your skill level. Here's an example: <https://peekaboopatternshop.com/isolation-gown/>.

To arrange for drop-off for masks or isolation gowns, contact your local PMMA community.

###

For clinical response questions, contact Jeanne Gerstenkorn, vice president for health and wellness, PMMA, at jgerstenkorn@pmma.org or 316-685-1100 or 316-250-8197.

For operations response questions, contact Bill Taylor, chief operating officer, at btaylor@pmma.org or 316-685-1100 or 785-643-5134.

For all other inquiries contact:

Karen Harriman, chief marketing officer and senior vice president for communications and public relations, at kharriman@pmma.org or 316-685-1100 or 314-605-6175.

Lisa Diehl, corporate communications director, at ldiehl@pmma.org or 316-685-1100 or 316-619-0531.