



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” – *Same Storm, Different Boats***  
DATE: October 9, 2020

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*“We are all in the same storm but different boats.” Anonymous*

The above quote appeared in a special report named, THE CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW, by Randi Mazzella for Next Avenue. It was used to help describe the different experiences and frustration levels of the US population living with the COVID-19 pandemic and is contributing to **“quarantine fatigue.”**

After months of living with the pandemic’s altered reality of normalcy, it is becoming much more difficult for everyone to stay cautious. It is obvious people miss daily routines, socialization with friends, and connections with family - especially during holidays. This new environment bends all those norms and that is what causes quarantine fatigue. Moreover, being exhausted from living in these conditions has caused some of us to become less careful or non-observant of the standards established to keep us safe from the COVID-19 virus, such as adhering to social distancing, washing hands frequently, disinfecting high touch surfaces and wearing masks. Even people who want to do their part by doing the “right” thing are becoming confused and exhausted.

Why am I telling you this about quarantine fatigue?

Well, I have some good news to share with you concerning visitations which will hopefully lessen all of our quarantine fatigue. It has been six months since the original guidance from the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) was issued to nursing homes on restricting visitation of all visitors and non-essential health care personnel. But recently, **CMS issued new guidance regarding visitation in nursing homes during the COVID-19 pandemic.** The new CMS Visitation Guidelines are aimed at balancing our residents’ need for visitation with the dangers inherent in permitting visitation in a pandemic by outlining a process for outdoor and indoor visits, as well as identifying triggers that would require a nursing home to return to a more restricted visitation environment via communicative devices or outdoor visits only.

As such, PMMA has adopted the Core Principles articulated within a CMS memorandum entitled Nursing Home Visitation – COVID-19 dated September 17, 2020. All of PMMA’s communities will allow visitation through various means based upon each PMMA community’s structure and its residents’ needs, including, but not limited to resident rooms, dedicated visitation spaces both outdoors and indoors, and compassionate care situations. Regardless of the type of visitation, PMMA and its communities will use our best efforts to adhere to the Core Principles of the CMS memorandum, in order to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission within our PMMA communities. The Core Principles are stated in an attachment to this letter.

The bottom-line is we need to commit to allowing visitors while still minimizing the risk of infection to our residents. Both are equally important so we have to be especially diligent in paying close attention to the details when we return to the world of visitation within our senior living communities. This is especially important as we approach the upcoming flu season and a potential second wave of the COVID-19 virus.

To assist family members and friends of our residents in visiting a PMMA community, we have created materials that hopefully simplify the guidelines for visitation for better understanding of the guidelines we have implemented. The guidelines underscore the need to educate visitors and residents in the required infection prevention protocols before visiting, as well as understanding the keys to communicating each individual PMMA community’s visitation status on any given day. The daily visit status (low, medium, high risk or positive case on campus) will appear on each community’s coronavirus page located within its own website. The visitation status will be set based upon each PMMA community’s local county’s positivity rate that is updated every two weeks.

I have included at the end of this letter our current samples that will be posted to each of our communities’ websites of the notifications for low risk, medium risk, high risk, indoor visitation suspended, and outdoor visitation only. The same notifications in a similar format will be posted to each of our communities’ facebook pages hopefully starting next week.

Please note, **we are requiring a call to your PMMA community to schedule a visit and to confirm the visitation status that is noted on a Community’s website or facebook page matches the actual visitation status for that day of your visit.**

Outside visits will continue as long as the weather permits them to happen. **A positive COVID test of a resident or employee at a community will stop all inside visitation.**

As with the many challenges we have faced during the pandemic, our staff members will move seamlessly toward keeping the balance between visitations and COVID-19 infection control because it benefits our residents’ overall psychological health and well-being. For that and many more reasons, we applaud our teams’ for their day-to-day commitment to our mission of “*providing quality senior care guided by Christian values.*”

*We remember before our God and Father  
your work produced by faith,  
your labor prompted by love, and  
your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.  
1 Thessalonians 1:3*

Remember we are all experiencing the same storm but just in different boats. The only way we will make it through this storm is for all of us to be paddling in the same direction which is for maintaining the health and safety of our residents, your family members and your friends.

God’s Blessings,



Bruce H. Shogren  
President/CEO

## **Core Principles of COVID-19 Infection Prevention**

- Screening of all who enter the facility for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g., temperature checks, questions or observations about signs or symptoms), and denial of entry of those with signs or symptoms
- Hand hygiene (use of alcohol-based hand rub is preferred)
- Face covering or mask (covering mouth and nose)
- Social distancing at least six feet between persons
- Instructional signage throughout the facility and proper visitor education on COVID-19 signs and symptoms, infection control precautions, other applicable facility practices (e.g., use of face covering or mask, specified entries, exits and routes to designated areas, hand hygiene)
- Cleaning and disinfecting high frequency touched surfaces in the facility often, and designated visitation areas after each visit
- Appropriate staff use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Effective cohorting of residents (e.g., separate areas dedicated COVID-19 care)
- Resident and staff testing conducted as required

These core principles are consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance for nursing homes, and should be adhered to at all times. Additionally, visitation should be person-centered, consider the residents' physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being, and support their quality of life. The risk of transmission can be further reduced through the use of physical barriers (e.g., clear Plexiglas dividers, curtains). Also, nursing homes should enable visits to be conducted with an adequate degree of privacy. Visitors who are unable to adhere to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention should not be permitted to visit or should be asked to leave. By following a person-centered approach and adhering to these core principles, visitation can occur safely.

▲  
**LOW  
RISK**

<5% COUNTY  
POSITIVITY RATE

**Indoor and outdoor  
visits allowed  
with screening  
and precautions.**

*Outdoor visits preferred –  
weather permitting.*

STAYSAFE 

▲▲  
**Medium  
RISK**

5-10% COUNTY  
POSITIVITY RATE

**Outdoor visits allowed  
with screening  
and precautions.**

**Indoor visits allowed  
with screening and  
negative COVID-19 test.**

*Outdoor visits preferred –  
weather permitting.*

STAYSAFE 

▲▲▲  
**HIGH  
RISK**

**OUTDOOR  
VISITATION  
ONLY**

*Compassionate care visits  
continue on case-by-case basis.*

STAYSAFE 



# INDOOR VISITATION SUSPENDED

*Compassionate care visits  
continue on case-by-case basis.*

STAYSAFE 



# OUTDOOR VISITATION ONLY

*Compassionate care visits  
continue on case-by-case basis.*

STAYSAFE 