

5/13/20

Happy Wednesday everyone! I hope you had a wonderful Mother's Day weekend. We certainly did! The residents loved the flowers from the Sisters and all the personal Mother's Day Grams that were sent in were so special! The staff are enjoying reading them and sharing in those special moments with your loved ones.

First, we want to thank all of you. Thank YOU for being so patient, kind, and understanding as we move through this pandemic together. In our history of serving elders, we have never experienced a pandemic like this. We hope and pray our decisions are the best for everyone involved. We know we will learn from this experience but for now, we have to make the best decisions we can based on the advice of the professionals and the government agencies that regulate us. We also know some of these restrictions are very difficult for our families. That is why we wanted to tell you that we appreciate YOU and all you are doing for us! We can feel the prayers and we appreciate the donations to help our staff morale! Nothing helps ease the stress of a pandemic like food! So again, THANK YOU!

So with that being said, I have many things to update you on this week. I am sure there will be more to come with the buzz about requiring nursing homes to test residents and staff for COVID-19 but that information is so new that we are still putting things together. I will have more on that for you soon! So for now I will start with this!

- As you may know, Governor Tom Wolf has stated May 15th "The Stay At Home Order for PA residents of Blair County will be lifted and business will begin moving to the YELLOW phase of reopening.

However, he has also stated that:

-Protecting the Vulnerable: People 65 years and older, and/or people with serious underlying health conditions, including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune system is compromised such by chemotherapy should remain sheltered in place until after the final wave has been completed and limit their public exposure.

Nursing and Assisted Living Facilities: Should remain closed to visitors and shelter in place at least until all other openings have occurred, then a re-evaluation can take place.

There is no doubt from us that this is a very difficult situation for everyone. We understand how much you miss your loved ones. We certainly wish things were different, but until the restrictions are lifted we feel it is our duty to continue to ensure the safety of our residents and staff. These restrictions may seem harsh, but let us reassure you that they are essential for the safety and protection of your loved ones health and safety. The COVID-19 virus is nothing to be lenient about. It is very serious and very dangerous to the elderly and those with compromised health conditions.

- We do want to remind you that just because we are restricted, that does not mean you cannot visit with your loved ones. We have had great success with phone calls and the virtual visits. Actually, we have very few residents who have not had a virtual visit of some type. We are able to facilitate a virtual visit with you and your loved one no matter what type of device or operating system you have. We have several IPADs here at the facility. We can also use Zoom. For Nursing residents please contact our activities department at 814-695-5571 and for Our Lady of the Alleghenies please call 814-695-5571 and ask for Michelle Bookhammer to arrange a virtual visit.
- Many residents also enjoy the personalized Garvey-Grams from families. I encourage you to continue emailing me your Garvey Grams. Many of you have probably used E-cards before.

Think of the Garvey Grams as E-cards. If you have a message to send to your loved one, please send it to me. I will make it into a special E-card to match your message. Send me Birthday wishes, Get Well Wishes, whatever you would like to send. Email me at hkeller@garveymanor.org

- **“Through the Looking Glass”** Since the stay at home order will be lifted, **BEGINNING FRIDAY:** we will now be able to offer window visits with your loved ones. These will need scheduled ahead of time and will be done in the lobbies in the front of the building. We cannot do visits outside of your loved ones room windows because it can be very distressing for other residents to see people walking around outside their windows. Also, many areas of our terrain are not safe for visitors to walk through. Please also note we will do our best to accommodate requests but please be understanding that visits may not be able to be scheduled immediately. We ask that you be flexible and patient with us please.
- To schedule a **“Through the Looking Glass”** visit:
 - You will need to call ahead to schedule these visits. For Nursing residents please contact our activities department at 814-695-5571 and for Our Lady of the Alleghenies please call 814-695-5571 and ask for Michelle Bookhammer. Here is how the visit works: You will need to bring a cellular phone with you. A staff member will bring your loved one to the window in the lobby at the time of your visit. There will be a phone number posted on the lobby window where your loved one will be seated that you will call. The staff member will help them to answer the phone we have provided by the window. You will then be able to see and talk with you loved one **“Through the Looking Glass”**.
 - For infection control PLEASE do not touch the windows. It is very imperative that you do not touch the windows and do not sit in the chairs. If you need to sit during the visit please bring your own chair. Every time you touch something it must be disinfected. We want to make the most of our supplies and use them as wisely as possible. The disinfectant we have is vital to maintaining the diligence our staff has in keeping surfaces inside our facility disinfected. The more disinfectant we have to use on outside surfaces the less we have to keep the entire inside of the facility disinfected.

While we know none of this can replace human contact, we remain committed to doing whatever we can to keep you and your loved ones connected. We hope that these alternatives will grant you some peace.

While our management team was discussing all of these restrictions, we found that we as a facility are struggling emotionally. We know this is so difficult for all of you and that hurts us. Sister Jacinta took us back to our CORE Values. They are **Hospitality, Shared Commitment, Compassion, and Sanctity of Life**. We are a compassionate facility. We have always offered the utmost amount of hospitality to our residents and families. That is who we are. We have never wanted to just be better. We want to be the best. But this virus has stricken us of our ability to be hospitable to you.

But then Sister reminded us that the reason we are doing what we are doing and following these guidelines so strictly is to respect the Sanctity of Life of the residents God has entrusted into our care. So as difficult as it is for us to say “no” to many of you, we anticipate that we will have several more weeks where we may have to say no to you. But as I said, we are committed through the Shared Commitment of our entire team to make the best of this situation. We ask for your continued prayers of protection,

prayers of strength, prayers of compassion, and prayers of understanding that we will all get through this together.
God Bless,