

Dear family members,

This has been a very difficult year with the COVID-19 pandemic, but I am pleased to share some good news. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has found a COVID-19 vaccine to be safe and effective, and our facility will be able to give the vaccine to residents. This is very encouraging news.

A COVID-19 vaccine will soon be available to all residents. We are moving forward with our plans and will provide additional details soon. In the meantime, we want to provide you with information regarding the vaccine and encourage you to call with any questions or concerns you may have. Prior to administering any vaccine, we will be reaching out to you, as the primary contact, for consent to administer the vaccine to your loved one. Please know this process is moving very quickly and when we are contacted to schedule our vaccination clinic we will have a very short window of time to obtain consents so we encourage you to ask your questions now. We will only receive the exact number of doses that we have obtained consent for. After the initial vaccination clinic will likely not have access to the vaccine again until it becomes available to the general public, so we need you to give it serious consideration now. There will be no costs to get the vaccine.

We encourage as many residents as possible to get this vaccine. The elderly have a much higher risk for getting very sick, being hospitalized, or dying from COVID-19. The vaccine has been shown to provide a great deal of protection against serious illness due to COVID-19. **The more residents that get vaccinated, the better we can protect our community against potential outbreaks and save lives.**

This vaccine has gone through testing and clinical trials to ensure it meets the highest safety standards. It also is safe to get if you already had the virus. The health and safety of our residents is always our top priority, and we are confident this vaccine is a much better option than the risk of getting this virus.

Please read the attached EUA fact sheet and contact Deb Sutton RN, Laura DeBoer RN or Amber Brunow, our Infection Preventionist with any questions. Potential side effects are listed on the fact sheet. You will find that these side effects are similar to the potential side effects of the flu shot, but they occur more frequently. The vaccine requires two doses. Residents will need to get both doses to ensure the best results. The second dose will be given approximately 21 to 28 days after the first dose.

We will continue to take all necessary precautions after the vaccine is administered, including wearing personal protective equipment and conducting regular testing, to ensure the safety of our residents and staff. We anticipate that CDC & CMS will re-evaluate the current restrictions for isolation and visitation in the future for those residents that have received the vaccine. When any changes are made we will work with public health officials to determine how and when to adjust our policies for visitations and social activities and keep you updated.

There is a light at the end of the tunnel. We are hopeful that the vaccine will be a lifesaving turning point in the fight against COVID-19. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with any questions. You may also visit www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines to learn more about the vaccine.

Best regards,

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