



April 13, 2020

Dear Residents of RiverWoods Exeter, RiverWoods Durham and Birch Hill,

I hope you all were able to enjoy some fresh air and sunshine this weekend, and that you had some time to enjoy your faith, even if it was not in the way you initially imagined.

As we head into a new week, I want to provide you with a few follow-ups and reminders.

STAFF TESTING

We will begin testing our staff teams on Wednesday. We have about 760 employees to process so it will be an interesting few days. We expect the testing to run from Wednesday to Saturday and will have results back for each employee within 24 hours of his/her test.

While we do not have any staff (or residents) who are showing any signs or symptoms of the virus, we are concerned enough with the prevalence of stories about asymptomatic people testing positive that we believe this will be a very worthwhile endeavor. We hope and pray that all our staff will test negative for this virus, but we know there is a possibility that some of us are asymptomatic/positive. This testing allows us to know, as well as we can, and to adjust. And that is what we will do.

Any staff member who tests positive for the virus will be taken off our schedule and will not be back on site until they are cleared to return medically. We will not be disclosing the name(s) of any employee who tests positive, and we ask that you please respect the privacy of our employees if you notice that someone you regularly see may not be onsite for a few weeks.

RESIDENT TESTING

We expect that next week we will begin testing the residents of our health care centers (assisted living, memory support, and nursing care). Again, no residents are showing signs or symptoms of the virus (and we check three times per day!)

but we want to be *as sure as we can*, this will help us limit any impact if we do have someone with a positive test.

After that we believe ConvenientMD can provide our independent living residents the opportunity for a telehealth screening that may qualify you for testing. We will have more details on this in the coming week or so.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Reading the newspaper tells you that the world is already starting to think about “when can we go back to normal?” While I would love to say “soon,” that seems unlikely.

The Governor’s “stay at home” order is through May 4th. That is a starting point for discussion, but should not be a solid date in your minds as to when this is “over.” In early May, we will begin to consider the various ways we can safely relax some restrictions, but you can expect that our visitor restrictions may be in place for a while longer. We want nothing more than for you to be completely healthy when this first wave has passed. And then we will want to avoid a second wave.

Which leads to my regular reminder - please don’t try to outsmart the guidelines. This time period is about keeping your circle, and your *community’s* circle, very tight. Every decision you make impacts you and your neighbors. Six feet means six feet. No visitors means no visitors; even if they are just walking with you on the grounds. Wearing your mask (now **THAT** is a great idea!) keeping it on anytime you anticipate being around others...and knowing that wearing the mask doesn’t make you immune or able to stand closer than six feet... those are all little slices of genius!

As we head into the middle and end of April, I am hopeful that we will get some good weather, ample outside time, activities that allow for some interaction (six feet apart) and some fun.

You’ve done harder things in your life – you can do this. I believe in you!

EMPLOYEE EMERGENCY FUND

We have established a fund that allows an employee who tests positive to continue to receive their paycheck while they are isolating at home. This fund also

helps to support employees who have already been financially impacted by the pandemic. These stresses have been caused by increased day care costs and the loss of income from a spouse or partner. The impacts of the virus are many. We want to do all we can to support our team members at this time, so the fund is available to any member of our staff, at any community.

Our leadership team suggested this fund, and has already made more than \$20,000 in donations to it. As a leadership team we are so impressed with how our teams have stepped up, helped out, and overcome their personal challenges in this crazy time period. We know you see it too, because you have begun to donate generously. Thank you.

I hope that these funds are never needed for “bad” things, and that we can use them to recognize staff in a good way when we are through this, but for now it is best to be prepared, and best to be a family that is looking out for all of its members. That’s what we do.

THANK YOU

Thank you to all of you who have written notes or cards to me, to our leadership team, and to our staff members. You have been crafty, funny, kind and very thoughtful. Please know how much we appreciate hearing from you ... hearing your questions (which help us communicate better) hearing your support (always nice) and hearing your concerns (which help us make better decisions).

And a thank you to all of you who have committed so much time to sewing masks for our staff, for yourself, and your neighbors. We keep saying that we will do everything we can to keep the virus out of the community. Wearing a mask is one step of many, but it is an important one, and you have helped us do that.

And thank you for maintaining your sense of community and your sense of humor. For sure this isn’t how we thought 2020 would start, but by staying together we can ensure it will end strong.

You will hear more information from us as the week moves on. Until then, thank you and stay healthy my friends!



Justine Vogel, TRWG CEO