

May 11, 2020

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

This past week you've been hearing from your Executive Directors about various ways we intend or have already started to safely "open up" a variety of internal functions and services over the next several weeks. This will provide for some additional social opportunities within the campus in ways that seem safe to expand. As we move forward, we will assess and consider other options, but as I mentioned last week, our pace will lag behind the state's.

You've also heard about our testing results, and the fact that the state is focusing on opportunities for testing every 7-10 days within long term care communities (mainly nursing homes, but also assisted living communities that are attached to nursing homes) and long-term care workers. We hope to have more details on that plan this week.

I want you to know that we have heard your desire to "get out;" leave the campus, visit your family and friends, or go other places. We totally understand. The isolation of being in one place can be really maddening; you are active people who want to be active. We know that for some of you this has gone on "long enough" but for others the concern is about making sure your campus stays as safe as humanly possible. That is the balance we are trying very hard to achieve. As an aside... it would be easier if you all had the SAME opinion, but humans being what they are, you don't. That certainly makes our job more interesting!

Our plan is to be safe and reasonable. With the state starting to open up, risk will increase; and transmission will likely spread. Our goal is risk *mitigation* and proper pace. As I have said before, we want and need to let science catch up. Here's why:

- Four weeks ago, there was essentially no testing being done in NH. Now we are testing 1,500 people per day, and expect to test up to 2,000 per day in the following weeks.
- Four weeks ago, test results took 5-7 days, now we expect results in about 36-48 hours.

- Four weeks ago, there was no known antiviral treatment, now Remdesivir is being used for the most critically ill, with some hope for other treatments.
- Four weeks ago, there was no vaccine... and there is still no vaccine... but human trials have started on several different vaccine options with an anticipation that if the trials are successful some vaccines could be administered in the fall/early winter.

My point? Time matters, and science *is* catching up. We need patience, which isn't my specialty and may not be yours, but patience is our best weapon these days. With that, there are a few things we are working to adjust regarding "going out."

1. **Quarantine period for doctor visits** – we are developing a questionnaire for doctor's offices, and within a set of guidelines whereby a doctor visit may not require a quarantine period. It is our expectation that, based on the strict guidelines within the functions, appointments for dialysis or chemotherapy will not require quarantine, and other doctor's offices may meet our guidelines. However, we will still require that you take certain safety measures. We are developing a process for this and anticipate rolling it out in the next week.
2. **Quarantine period in general** – with Rite Aid now offering free testing, we will develop a process within which we *may* be able to combine quarantining and test results to shorten the quarantine period. It still takes several days to have enough viral upload for a test result to be as accurate as possible (if you test too early after exposure it is likely you would receive a false negative), and then a few days for results, so if this works it would reduce but not eliminate the quarantine period. We are going to test this process to see if it can be effective in the next week.
3. **Other** –things that are still "not ok" and will require a quarantine period... things like walking or driving to a grocery store (while our internal stores may not be exactly what you *want*, we do have a working process to get you what you *need*, and again...people are germy), coffee shops, retail shopping... These would all require a quarantine period, and we would really prefer you just not do them.

Just hang in there with us for a while longer. Four weeks matters, and as you read above, a lot of things can happen in that timeframe. This is the first time any of us have been in a global pandemic, and we are figuring things out together. We hear you, but we have to take things slow. It has been eight weeks, and it has been hard, but it hasn't been totally awful. We are together, and we are here for one another.

The next month will be a challenge. We expect that case counts will increase because the state is offering more opportunities for testing. That is a good thing. The testing will provide us with better knowledge, and knowing is better than not knowing.

Once the case counts stabilize and decline we can consider even more "opening" within our communities. We know you want to see your families and we are working hard on setting up the safest way for that to happen in the near future. And we know you want to go out and do other "non campus" things. That really needs to wait for now. Every four weeks we have made strides in knowledge, but there is still so much we don't know.

We live and work in community. That matters. I ask our staff to consider every decision they make outside of our doors with their favorite resident in mind (yes, we have favorites) and I would ask you to do the same. Consider your neighbors and don't be "patient zero." Every decision you make about things you *want* to do should include its potential impact on your neighbors and friends... no decision impacts you alone. That is what community means, and right now, those decisions can be life or death. So, choose wisely my friends.

So many of you have done wonderful things in these past two months to help our staff and help our community. You've contributed your time, expertise to help your neighbors, sewn, cheered, thanked, talked to us. Beyond that, you have filled in when your friends are missing their family, and appreciated our staff in ways that remind them that their hard work is important. In some ways this virus has brought out the best in all of us. We have had to slow down and listen and appreciate one another and our lives. You've done that. You are role models for our whole team. Thank you.

In closing today, think of it this way: if you are 75, this time period is like investing **1/200th** of your life in the health and safety of our community and your neighbors.

You can do that by staying put, and that's not so bad. It isn't easy, but it is doable. Math matters, and science does too. We just need to give scientists a bit more time.

Stay Healthy my friends,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justine Vogel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "V".

Justine Vogel
TRWG CEO