

April 10, 2020

# Communiqué

## Coronavirus Update

We recognize that these are challenging times for Residents, Team Members, and families. In this unprecedented era, Willow Valley Communities must contemplate many decisions and, ultimately, take actions that help ensure the safety of our community while maintaining the essentials of day-to-day operations. Willow Valley Communities' COVID-19 Response Team meets every day to actively discuss developments related to COVID-19 and, where prudent, make corresponding temporary changes to our operation.

In addition to the many existing precautions communicated previously, we are offering these reminders and announcements:

### **1. Masks Required on Campuses**

In accordance with PA Governor Tom Wolf's April 3, 2020 recommendation, Residents must wear a mask when leaving their own residence; this means in any public area—indoor or outdoor. We recognize that some Residents may not currently have a mask. Willow Valley Communities is in the process of obtaining cloth masks if you need one. In the meantime, if you do not have access to a mask of any type, please call the Concierge Desk.

### **2. Conduct Business by Phone**

Please conduct your Willow Valley Communities business via the phone or email when possible. Please refrain from visiting offices such as the bookkeeper, social worker, or Resident Life Coordinators in person. If you do leave your residence, remember to practice social distancing, and wear your mask.

### **3. Nursing Office**

In person visits are cancelled. Residents with requests such as routine blood pressure, weight measurement, and general questions will not be handled face-face in the office. IF you are sick please CALL the nursing office. If you have an emergency, please pull your "trouble cord."

### **4. Common Areas Closed**

To eliminate gathering and promoting social distancing, please note that common areas are now closed (see list below). For the same reason, note that outdoor communal areas that are customarily re-opened at this time of year (The VUE, Campus Courtyards, and similar) will remain closed until further notice.

- Fitness Rooms
- Puzzle Tables
- Card Tables
- Billiards
- Pool
- Art Studios
- Woodshops
- Library\*

\*Please note that the library remains open for item check-out only. Please select your books(s) or DVD(s) and enjoy the In your own residence.

*(over please)*

## **5. No Visitors / Guests**

As mentioned several times already, Willow Valley Communities is closed to visitors and guests. Please note the following clarifications:

- Unfortunately, this precautionary policy comes at a special time of year: Easter/Passover Weekend. Please note that Residents are not permitted to have guests for Easter/Passover.
- The no visitor policy applies to all residence styles, including the outer buildings, such as villas and town homes. Guests are not permitted on campus. This applies to both Independent and Supportive Living, with an exception for end-of-life circumstances within one week of anticipated passing in Supportive Living.
- The no visitor policy applies to family members; they are considered guests and are not permitted until further notice.

## **6. Stay at Home Order**

Per the PA governor's order, all Pennsylvania residents are mandated to stay at home except for truly necessary trips, such as medication, doctor visits, necessary groceries, and the like. This applies to Residents of Willow Valley Communities, and includes the prohibition of cross-campus visits (example: a Lakes Resident is not permitted to visit a Manor Resident). Please heed the governor's order.

## **7. Independent COVID-19 Testing**

If you, a Resident, are being tested for COVID-19 by your own physician, please notify Resident Nursing right away.

## **8. Pharmacy Deliveries**

A reminder that HealthDirect Pharmacy (formerly Williams Apothecary) at Manor North continues to deliver throughout Willow Valley Communities. Also, HealthDirect is accepting Tricare Insurance. Please feel free to use this service as a means to reduce or eliminate trips outside of your residence.

## **9. No Campus Meetings Next Week**

As a result of the time and energy being put into the COVID-19 management planning and implementation, there will be no Campus meetings next week, virtual or recorded. We will make every attempt to have an information session available for the normally scheduled Quarterly meeting in May. In the meantime, many of the questions being asked and answered can be found on our website ([www.willowvalleycommunities.org/coronavirus](http://www.willowvalleycommunities.org/coronavirus)).

## **10. Person Under Investigation or Positive Case for COVID-19**

Several Residents and Team Members have asked to better understand Willow Valley Communities' protocols for handling an investigation for, or positive case of, COVID-19 within our community. Attached to this Communique, please find a written description of our processes and protocols employed in these instances. It includes an explanation of several key measures including direct close contact and contact tracing.

In these truly unique times in which each of us is being asked to adapt to temporary, but important changes, please remember the famous quote, "We cannot accomplish all we need to do without working together." Please continue to do your part to help us mitigate the risk of COVID-19 at Willow Valley Communities.

Despite the unique circumstances we are all experiencing, the Willow Valley Communities team wishes you a weekend filled with joy, comfort, and peace.

*Denny*—Denny Griest, President and Chief Financial Officer

*(see attachment)*

## **What Happens When a COVID-19 Case is Under Investigation or Identified?**

When the COVID-19 crisis began, Willow Valley Communities quickly assembled a COVID-19 Emergency Response Team that meets daily. Each day, without revealing names, this Team reviews the number of Residents and/or Team Members by status such as under investigation, tested negative, and tested positive; and policies, protocols, and systems. Willow Valley Communities is adhering to, and sometimes exceeding, recommendations and guidance issued and updated frequently by recognized government and health authorities such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the State of Pennsylvania, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and others in an effort to mitigate potential exposure to Residents and Team Members.

Drive-through checkpoints on each campus are the first points of health and risk screening. At the screening checkpoint, past travel, temperatures, and symptoms are assessed and identified. This screening has been in place for Team Members since March 12th; the same screening will be implemented for Residents entering our Campuses beginning April 9, 2020. There are two levels of screeners at the checkpoints: a first line screener and a clinical screener. If Team Member has a temperature of 100 degrees or more, or reports new or unexplained symptoms of a cough, sore throat, or shortness of breath, he or she is sent home. If Residents experience the same they will be referred to the Resident Nurse and may be asked to isolate.

In the event that a Resident or Team Member has a pending or positive COVID-19 test, a specific contact tracing protocol, established by The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), is conducted. The purpose of the contact tracing is to identify any persons (Residents or Team Members) who may have had DIRECT close contact with an individual under investigation. Specific Willow Valley Communities Team Leaders are then assigned to notify individuals who would have had direct close contact with the Resident or Team Member who is under investigation or has tested positive. Please keep in mind the definition of DIRECT CLOSE CONTACT: a prolonged duration of *15 minutes within 3-6' feet with no protection*.

Please note: Due to HIPPA laws, the names of pending or positive COVID-19 cases will not be shared publicly.

If the contact tracing process identifies public areas that may have been used by the Resident or Team Member testing positive, those areas will be cleaned with a specialty product that have been approved by the CDC for killing corona viruses and is also EPA approved.

Team Members who are under investigation and test positive for COVID-19 are required to follow specific PA Department of Health guidelines. Residents who are under investigation or who have tested positive are isolated in their residence. They are required to not leave their apartment and not have others enter except in the case of a true emergency. Details about obtaining mail, groceries, trash removal, etc. are discussed with the Residents so that individualized plans are put in place based on needs. Residents who have had DIRECT close contact with the Resident under investigation or with positive results are also instructed to isolate in their own residence.

A Supportive Living Resident or an Independent Living Resident who would need additional care due to COVID-19 would go to either the hospital or a designated skilled care COVID-19 unit that has temporarily been established at The Glen. This unit has 15 designated beds for only COVID-19 patients. Specific Team Members have been identified and assigned to work in this unit. They have received additional infection control training by The Glen's Infection Preventionist. Willow Valley Communities' medical director, Dr. Thomas Braide, will serve as the physician who attends these Residents.