

04/01/2020



Hello to our Optalis families & friends:

We believe transparency alleviates fear. We will try to be as transparent as we can be but understand that this is an ever changing landscape and we are making decisions daily on how to best protect and care for everyone.

Communication:

We are sure many, if not all are feeling the pressures these days. If you have specific questions about your loved one please contact the facility directly – we understand that at times it is difficult to get through on the phones with the high volume of calls going in and coming out daily at each facility, when you speak with the facility next ask who can be your contact person and what method – phone or email is the best way to reach them.

Processes in place to protect:

We would like to tell you some processes that we have in place to protect your loved ones and our employees.

All staff are screened prior to entry in the building for any signs of COVID-19. We are reviewing any risks from home that may exclude them from working without further monitoring.

In all of the buildings at this time (including our assisted living centers) employees are wearing surgical masks while in the facility. This will reduce any chance of exposing your loved ones to our staff that do come and go from the building and come and go between patients.

If a patient develops a cough we are explaining to the patient why, and will place a surgical mask on them to protect everyone while the physician teams exam to determine next steps. When necessary we isolate the patient pending testing. This reduces risk even if a patient were to show changes.

If a resident in the Assisted living department shows a change in status or a cough- the same measures will be taken as above- we will attempt to move them from the ALF to a facility if that seems appropriate as care level at the ALF are for the more independent person. (of course, the family will be notified at the moment of concern).

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Directives:

The directives from CMS are that we are not to send patients to the hospital unless their condition warrants a higher level of care. And honestly, our facilities are safer at this time for our patients. We have the ability to do testing onsite and send off to the lab for most things.

We have also been given directives to take patients from the hospital needing to release beds for the more critical patients at the hospital. We realize those patients are coming to us from a high COVID prevalent environment – therefore we have **created transitional units (or hallways) in every building** where patients will stay for the first 14 days with monitoring frequently for any signs or symptoms of the virus.

When cleared after 14 days those resident will move to the **regular rehab section that is close to the gym.**

We have another section in every building that will **be for any patients showing signs of the virus or have tested +. If unknown COVID status we will test and they will be kept in isolation.** Our isolation

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rooms have very specific procedures with complete gown glove mask(N95) and goggles. Staff has all been trained and retrained on infectious disease principles. I am very pleased with their attentiveness to keeping our patients safe as well as their own families that they go home to.

Our long term care residents are kept separate from the other areas.

Our staff works in one area at a time not crossing into another. These interventions have proven to yield great results in other facilities to keep residents safe. We have procedures to keep everything separate from dietary to laundry to housekeeping to reduce spread.

On a side note if any of you have contacts for PPE equipment - **N95 masks, surgical masks, gowns, goggles, & shoe covers.**

We have current supplies but depending on duration we are actively seeking to increase stock- as you have heard is difficult to find.

You will be notified...

If your loved ones condition changes or monitoring shows a need to test or isolate... you will be called.

If we have to move your loved ones room to consolidate and further protect one area ... you will be called – We ask for patience and trust that we are trained for this and are following all guidelines given for MDHHS and the CDC.

We can only promise that we are highly skilled and qualified to care for your loved ones during this time. Our staff is dedicated to our mission to provide the best possible care.

As we move through these days may we be mindful that all of these people needing help are someone's loved one. We are committed to help as we are called to. We thank you for your trust in us.

May whatever beliefs, faith or wellness practices you lean on guide us in these days and bring peace in times of stress.

Sincerely,
The Entire Optalis Team