



April 25, 2023

Dear Family Members/Responsible Parties:

I'm pleased to report with this COVID update that we've had no new resident cases for more than eight (8) weeks. The DOH has issued further clarifications to guidance and I am happy to tell you that face masks (source control) is no longer required in the facility for residents, visitors, and staff as long as the County transmission rate remains below a high level. This is effective today! The DOH & CDC recommend continued use of face masks for those who had a recent close contact/high exposure with someone with Covid-19, those who reside on a red/yellow covid unit during an outbreak, and those who have suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19 or other respiratory infection (ie: influenza, URI, runny nose/cough/sneezing).

We continue with the passive screening process and the updated recommended visitation hours and facility entrance time frames. Recent CMS communications stress that Covid is an identifiable virus, just like influenza, and should be managed similarly. When the pandemic began over three (3) years ago we had very little information or knowledge about the Covid virus, and little resources. Today, we have a myriad of interventions available to prevent and/or control the spread of the Covid virus—testing, vaccines, a sufficient supply of PPE, antiviral treatment medications, infection control strategies, scientific & infectious disease data, research outcomes, environmental cleaning & disinfecting enhancements are all commonplace. In addition, the common expectation is that all persons within a community (such as Erie/Niagara Counties) act responsibly in regards to Covid (ie: understanding the signs and symptoms of the virus and staying home if you are sick) and this now allows health care facilities to adopt the same practices that have been in place for many months in all other aspects of our community. Therefore, I ask that you continue to prioritize practicing infection prevention & control standards as you enjoy the updated facility visitation guidelines outlined below and review a copy of the complete facility visitation plan that is attached and available at the reception desks. The transition to passive screening allows for the following:

- **Suggested Visitation hours Daily will be:** **10:00AM - 7:30PM**
- **Facility entrances will be unlocked Daily:**

Millersport:	8:00AM – 8:00PM
Stahl Road:	10:00AM – 5:30PM
- **Residents will be permitted Three (3) visitors at a time in their room** (Adults over 18 or minors accompanied by an adult)
- **You no longer have to complete a screening form when you visit but you are required to sign-in & sign-out at a facility entrance**
- Pay attention to the posted signage as well as the visitation guideline attachment
- These are the recommended actions to prevent Covid-19 transmission to others if you have any of the following:
 1. A Positive Covid-19 Test
 2. Symptoms of Covid-19:

Fever/Chills	Cough	New Loss Taste or Smell
Sore Throat	Headache	Muscle or Body Ache
Fatigue	Congestion/Runny Nose	Nausea or Vomiting
Diarrhea	Shortness of Breath/Difficulty Breathing	
 3. Close Contact with someone with Covid-19

Visitors who have a positive Covid-19 test or symptoms of Covid-19 should not visit per CMS/CDC guidance until they have completed the appropriate isolation (quarantine) period. Visitors who have had a close contact with someone with COVID-19 are strongly encouraged to defer visitation until completion of an appropriate isolation period and/or have a negative COVID test taken at home. Those with close contact should talk with facility staff to assist with determining appropriate visitation

The facility is responsible to insure visitors are properly educated. To that end, please remember if you feel sick or have any mild symptoms, please stay home to recover and don't risk passing the virus, or any illness, to your loved one and potentially other residents & staff. Further, please adhere to the infection prevention & control protocols while you visit—**wear your face mask**, when required, properly and at all times (as mandated by the DOH per the community transmission rate), **practice hand hygiene** and utilize the hand sanitizers that are available throughout the facility frequently, **socially & physically distance** from others, and avoid unnecessary contact with others beyond your family member, **adhere to any precautions** in place and ask the household staff for direction as needed. If you haven't already done so, please **consider getting the bivalent Covid booster** for your resident or yourself. The facility can provide for the residents either Pfizer or Moderna on Thursdays during our weekly vaccine clinic.

This is exciting news for all of us at the facility—No more face masks!! I will continue to provide further updates to facility protocols consistent with DOH requirements. If you have any questions then, please call your social worker, Cathy Davis (RN Director of Nursing), or myself. Thanks again for all that you do to keep our residents safe. Happy Spring!

Best Wishes, Rich McCune, Administrator