

10/15/2020

Dear Residents, family and responsible parties,

We are very excited to share the news that we are hopeful to initiate indoor visits. This initiation and continuation of indoor visits will be determined based on the presence of any positive cases within the facility as well as the positivity rate of Winona County. *The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)* has issued guidance on how we can safely re-open to visitors and continue to protect the health of our residents and staff. The guidance provided by *MDH* is quite detailed, and we appreciate your patience as we take time to evaluate and implement the criteria so that we can safely resume visits. These requirements not only apply to our ability to resume visits, but also identify when we may need to restrict visits if we experience a positive case of COVID-19 among our residents and staff, or if our broader community experiences a high rate of positive cases, or we encounter other factors that affect the safety of visitation.

Our ability to resume indoor visitation would not have been possible without the incredible commitment and dedication of our staff, who have worked hard to manage the risks of COVID-19 and provide compassionate care and support to our residents at a time when they are physically separated by their loved ones. We know that you, too, have made sacrifices during this difficult time and we thank you for your patience, support and understanding.

It is our intention to move to indoor visits on November 2, 2020. Prior to that date, we will share additional information with you on the policies, protocols and scheduling for visits. In the meantime, we remind you to take advantage of outdoor visits, window visits, and the ability to connect residents and their loved ones through alternative communication, such as FaceTime, Zoom and Skype.

For your planning purposes, please know we will follow a similar procedure for indoor visits as we do for outdoor visits. This will include:

- Screening of all visitors.
- Protocols for hand hygiene, wearing of proper PPE and social distancing requirements.
- Limiting the visit to a designated area within the building.
- Limiting physical contact (hugs, kisses, handshakes, etc.) to continue protecting everyone from potential virus transmission.
- Limiting the number of visitors in the building and the hours for visits.

We deeply appreciate the sacrifices you made to limit the impact of COVID-19 on our community and your patience as we prepare to host safe visits and other activities. Your messages of support, prayers, and caring will not be forgotten. There may be more challenges ahead, and we may need to make some adjustments as we roll-out our plan. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me at 507-494-7496 or ckrage@winonahealth.org if you have any questions or concerns. Our entire team looks forward to seeing you — families and friends are a core fabric of what makes our community so special.

Sincerely,

