



September 2, 2020

Dear Residents, Families, and Caregivers,

We continue to follow the guidance issued May 8, 2020, by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) regarding our plan to notify you regarding COVID-19. **Recorded mass phone messages and utilization of our facility website is our method of ongoing communication, which will provide the most current numbers of COVID-19 cases.** This method of communication will provide the most current updates and number of cases (if any). Although we realize mass phone messages do not replace a personal call, you are welcome to reach out to us with any specific questions.

Our COVID-19 tests had been coordinated through a contracted lab and the specimens were collected by the facility's staff. The facility's initial round of testing was completed on July 1, 2020. The results revealed one positive staff member. On July 9, 2020, through our facility call blast and on July 10, 2020, family members were informed that one employee tested positive for COVID-19 through our homepage update letter. As a result of this positive test result, we continued to perform weekly testing of all residents and staff, with additional staff noted to be positive for COVID-19 through the month of July. All residents remained negative throughout the testing process. Because all staff and residents were noted to be negative based on testing completed August 5 and 6 as well as August 12 and 13, we were able to implement our reopening plan. The plan has been posted on our website for review:

<https://www.thepatriotcommunity.com/covid-19-updates>

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services announced Friday, August 28, 2020, that all long-term care facilities must resume mandatory testing of **staff only**, based on the percentage of positivity of COVID-19 in the county your facility is located. Currently, Somerset County is below a 5% infection rate, so testing will be monthly, beginning the week of September 14. We will keep you advised of testing results and any changes that may occur as a result of the testing.

We continue to work with the Department of Health on additional follow-up measures. At this point, we are considered to be at a low-risk exposure based on the protective measures that The Patriot had previously implemented. Our residents and staff members will continue to be monitored for signs/symptoms consistent with COVID-19. We also continue to practice the mitigation measures we previously shared with you. We have effectively moved into Phase 2 of our reopening plan this date. This has enabled us to resume outdoor visits, limited communal dining and activities will begin on Personal Care this week followed by the third floor next week. The beautician will work onsite every Thursday and Friday, beginning September 10. NO residents that are in their 14-day quarantine period will be permitted to access the beautician, outdoor visits or participate in communal dining or activities.

Please know that we extend our most sincere gratitude to you and yours as we continue to provide love and attention to those in our care as we all navigate these unprecedented times. As always, please contact the facility with any questions at (814) 445-4549. Thank you from the staff of The Patriot, A Choice Community.

Sincerely,

Barbara Smith, RNC, NHA, PCHA

Administrator