



**October 7, 2020**

**Dear Residents, Families, and Caregivers,**

The Patriot, A Choice Community, remains in Phase 2 of our reopening plan. We continue to facilitate front door/outdoor visits and limited communal dining and activities, which have been of value to our residents. Staff will take residents who do not have visitors outside for a breath of fresh air.

The beautician continues to work onsite every Thursday and Friday. 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.

Zoom calls and window visits will continue for those residents. We will quarantine residents that may show signs and symptoms related to COVID-19 OR have gone to physician follow up in an area that has higher COVID-19 cases.

We are taking final steps to allow additional indoor visitation. Once approved, this information will be sent to all residents, families and responsible parties. We continue to work with the Department of Health, Department of Human Services and the Regional Response Health Collaboration Program (RRHCP) on additional follow-up measures. At this point, we are considered to be at a low-risk exposure based on the protective measures previously implemented. We also continue to practice the mitigation measures previously shared with you. As of Friday, September 11, 2020, the PA Department of Health required all staff to wear face shields or non-vented goggles in resident care areas in addition to all other protective measures in place since March of 2020.

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 in which your facility is located. Somerset County remains below a 5% infection rate (currently 1.0%) and staff testing was completed September 16 and 17, 2020. We are pleased to inform you that **all staff tested negative for COVID-19**. The next scheduled testing will take place in the week of October 12, 2020. Based on the results of staff testing will gauge if we are able to move forward with additional visitation on the third floor.

Department of Human Services, which oversees Personal Care (second floor) has yet to issue any guidance about additional visitation other than our Outdoor/Front Door visits. **Please note: if we are cleared to do visitation on the third floor, CMS is recommended that any visitor must have a COVID test within seven days of additional reopening.** You may want to reach out to your personal physician for guidance on getting the test done if necessary. Definitions and requirements for visits will be sent by mail prior to reopening.

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.](https://www.thepatriotcommunity.com/covid-19-updates)

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 or concerns you may have at (814) 445-4549. Thank you from the staff of The Patriot, A Choice Community.

**Sincerely,**

**Barbara Smith, RNC, NHA,  
PCHA Administrator**