



## **Covenant Living Special Update**

### **Terri Cunliffe / June 5, 2020**

Hello, I'm Terri Cunliffe, president and CEO of Covenant Living.

A lot has happened since my last update two weeks ago. Along with all of the normal day-to-day business of serving our residents, we have also worked to finalize our strategy for reopening, and continued global COVID-19 testing for residents and employees in Skilled Nursing and Assisted Living.

#### **Global Testing**

As I have previously shared, global testing provides a baseline on the number of positive COVID-19 cases for a specific moment in time. In some states testing is required, while in others we initiated the testing on our own. Our goal is to have tested every community by the end of this week, and we're almost there, despite the limited availability of testing kits in some of our markets.

So far, the results from global testing are very encouraging. There is only a handful of positive employee tests — including several locations with no positive employee tests — and with the exception of a few cases, resident tests results have all been negative. And yes, there are even communities where all of the residents in Skilled Nursing and Assisted Living have tested negative. That is great news.

Our goal for testing was to mitigate the possible spread of the virus by identifying as many asymptomatic cases of COVID-19 as possible. The frequency of ongoing testing differs from county to county, and some health departments require that residents and employees in healthcare be tested every seven days.

In general, the results of global testing affirm our diligence in following strict infection control protocols, and demonstrate our employees' commitment to following CDC guidelines to protect themselves, even away from work. We thank every resident and every employee for making this a priority! But we need to keep it up!

All along, we have known that Covenant Living would be impacted by the coronavirus, but we have some good news to share. For the fifth consecutive week, only 10 of our 17 communities have reported positive cases. And, thanks to your prayers and our committed healthcare, housekeeping and community leadership teams, Windsor Park is stable and Golden Valley is on the right track, and we continue to hear many stories of resident recoveries and employees returning to work.

## **Community Reopening**

In my last update, we talked about reopening our communities, starting Monday, June 8. As I shared before, those plans are contingent on state and local guidelines and timelines for reopening. Some communities may start reopening a little later than others. Your Executive Director will communicate the specific dates for reopening at your community, but here are a few highlights of what will happen.

Dining services or your Bistro will open for take-out only, but you can still choose to have your meals delivered. In Residential Living, immediate family members will be allowed to visit you in your apartment, up to three guests per visit. All visitors will undergo a health screening before entering the community and everyone will be required to wear masks in all common areas and hallways, but there will be no gathering in common areas and no overnight guests at this time.

As we get into reopening, prospective residents will again be invited to tour our communities, but health screening and masks will be required, and physical distancing will be practiced.

More programming, services and amenities will return through June, July and August. This week you received a guide to reopening that is intended to help you understand which services will be available and when. Your continued commitment to maintaining physical distancing, to avoid large group gatherings, to consistently using masks outside of your apartment, and routine handwashing, will be critical.

We cannot afford to lower our guard and give this virus opportunity to work its way into our communities.

## **Healthcare Visits**

Many of you have asked about visiting loved ones in Skilled Nursing and Assisted Living. It has been several months since you were able to visit, and we understand how difficult it has been, but we cannot yet reopen healthcare to other residents or family members. Based on guidance from state health officials and from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, we are required to follow strict protocols regarding visitors.

In the meantime, we will continue to facilitate virtual visits via Skype or FaceTime, and our staff are equipped with iPads and smart phones to assist with your virtual visit. In addition, each of our communities will work with families to arrange closed-window visits or balcony visits in Skilled Nursing and Assisted Living.

Recently, I was delighted to receive a photo of one resident in Skilled Nursing, who is 100 years old, connecting with her family through a closed window visit. Despite all of the barriers, her

face was filled with joy – just seeing and talking to her family through a window. What a blessing! To schedule a window visit, talk to your healthcare administrator.

## **Reflection**

As we all know, this week has been a difficult one for our entire country. I am both saddened and angered by the horrific display of violence and racial injustice that senselessly took the life of George Floyd, and countless others before him. This weekend, we watched the anger boil over as peaceful protests turned into riots, fires, curfews and wrecked lives and businesses throughout our nation. I pray that we as a nation can move towards understanding, justice and healing.

At Covenant Living, we are guided by the Great Commandment to love and serve God and one another as taught by Jesus Christ, and that mission compels us to affirm the dignity of each person in all that we do.

“The fruit of silence is prayer;  
the fruit of prayer is faith;  
the fruit of faith is love;  
the fruit of love is service;  
and the fruit of service is peace.”

Please join me this week in praying for peace, for protection and for a recognition of the deep inequalities that divide our nation.

Thank you and I will see you again in two weeks.