

## MEMORANDUM

Date: March 28, 2020

To: TLRC Residents, Family Members and Employees

From: R Kevin McFeely, President & CEO

Re: Initiation of Universal Face Mask and Home-Made Mask Usage

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Based on new guidelines, **all direct care staff in the Health Center, Assisted Living and North Ridge must now wear a mask when they have direct contact with residents.** Direct care staff includes housekeepers, laundry staff, dining services staff, nurses and nursing assistants, therapists, social workers and Life Enrichment staff.

I want to reassure you TLRC does **NOT** have any confirmed cases of COVID-19 for residents or employees. Again, this decision is based on updated protocols from CDC and to take a proactive approach to protect our most vulnerable residents from contacting COVID-19 from our caregivers. You may recall that 80% of confirmed COVID-19 cases are mild or display no symptoms. We are working hard to prevent COVID-19 from being presented unknowingly to a resident or another staff member.

Going forward, **all** employees are required to remove personal items out of resident care areas. This is consistent with our current policy. You are to eat your snacks and lunches in non-resident care areas as our policy states. There are no exceptions to this as is an infection control violation.

We will be suspending the Department Director rounds until further notice. Again, this is being done as an overabundance of caution in order to ensure staff members in the Health Center, Assisted Living and North Ridge are only the direct care givers. If you are not a direct care giver and need to speak with a resident or a staff member, please call them. The doors separating the different living areas in the Health Center are now closed with signs posted of this to remind you of this.

Regarding the masks, they can be a surgical mask or a home-made mask of 100% cotton. There are also techniques of using a bandana, folding it while using rubber bands as the ear loops. We are releasing you to wear home made masks in order to

efficiently and effectively utilize Personal Protective Equipment. If you wear a home-made mask, you must adhere to the proper procedures of wearing a mask, which is wearing the mask over mouth and nose, and not pulling the mask down around your neck or on your head. If you need additional information about how to properly wear the mask, please see Brita Carpenter, our Director of Nursing Services or view a video of this on YouTube.

If you do not have a home-made mask, a surgical mask will be issued to the direct care givers by the receptionist when you begin your shift. You will be required to wear that mask until it is wet or soiled. When this occurs, you will need to go to the charge nurse to obtain a new surgical mask. This is called a universal mask and has been approved by the CDC. The only exception to this are if you go into a resident room where the resident has a diagnosis of c-diff. On leaving the room of a resident with c-diff, please throw that mask away prior to leaving the room. After performing hand hygiene, please see the charge nurse to obtain another mask. All PPE is now locked up.

Lastly, no items will be allowed to be dropped off for residents. We are encouraging items be mailed or shipped via UPS, FedEx or Amazon, etc. in order to minimize the potential of COVID-19. We recognize these protocols are hardships and if there were other options, we would utilize them. We have been blessed thus far by not having any confirmed cases of COVID-19 on our campus, but as you are aware, each day continues to see an increase in confirmed cases in the State of Washington. Many of our employees have been trained in proper infection control procedures and we must continue to utilize this training. We encourage everyone to adhere to social distancing, good hand hygiene, staying away from sick people, exercise and have good eating habits.

We are a team and by being a team and working together, is the only way we will get through this. Part of the team includes family members and visitors and it is important for you to do your part, which includes following the protocols put into place and the other techniques mentioned earlier.

Thank you to all of our employees who have done a wonderful job taking care of themselves as well as taking care of the residents. To our family members, we thank you for your understanding of the steps we are taking to keep your loved ones safe and healthy. And to our residents, thank you for understanding all that we are doing is to protect you from contracting this virus.