

Dear Residents, Family Members and Friends,



I hope everyone continues to find the information in this weekly newsletter helpful. The newsletter is sent to responsible parties listed as the primary contact for residents of the Baldwin Care Center. The newsletter is sent electronically to the Apartment Manager in Birchwood Apartments and the Nurse Manager in Birch Haven Assisted Living to distribute as they see fit. Every edition of the newsletter is posted on the Baldwin Care Center at [www.baldwincarecenter.com](http://www.baldwincarecenter.com). If you are the primary contact listed for a resident, please make other family members aware of the content of the newsletter or direct them to the website to view the newsletter. If anyone has questions about any topic that appears in the newsletter or if you have any ideas about something else that you would like included, please feel free to contact me via email at [elafavor@baldwincarecenter.com](mailto:elafavor@baldwincarecenter.com) or by telephone at 715-684-3231, Ext. 103.



The past several weeks I have discussed COVID-19 testing for staff and residents of the Baldwin Care Center. I have some additional information this week. I wouldn't necessarily call it good news, but news nonetheless. The guidance from the State of Wisconsin is to test staff at least every two weeks. The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is still recommending weekly testing in states with a high incidence, which Wisconsin is still considered. This week I was contacted by the State of Wisconsin Emergency Management indicating that the order I placed several weeks ago for test kits is on hold due to shortages of tests and will not be delivered. The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) discussed the recent partnership with some new laboratories that will be able to provide and process tests. The State of Wisconsin has a contract with two new laboratories. One of the labs is in Milwaukee and the other is in the state of Washington. The regional DHS Division of Quality Assurance offices will be contacting facilities regarding testing. In a memo that DHS released this week they indicated that they will assign relationships between a new lab and each facility. Thus far, I do not believe there is information available on what type of tests each lab will be able to provide. The two options for labs available prior to this for facilities, were not able to provide certain types of tests. Exact Sciences, the lab that we received our testing supplies and tests from provided us with a simple nasal swab. This type of test is much easier to administer, especially for residents. The other lab that was an option was Marshfield Clinic Lab. The only test that they were able to provide was the nasopharyngeal swab test. This test is much more invasive and would be difficult for residents to manage and probably for many staff as well. I am hopeful that the lab that we will be assigned has the simple nasal swabs available for tests. The Department of Health Services has indicated that the transition to the new labs will occur throughout August. Facilities are selected based on size, location and outbreak status. There is no new information on the point-of-care tests that CMS has begun distributing. It sounds like tests were distributed to several hotspot COVID19 areas of the country that were seeing a higher positivity rate. Each facility in the country will be receiving the point-of-care tests at some point. We are uncertain as to when we will receive the point-of-care tests. These are the tests that the facility will be able to do internally and know the results within 15 minutes. I will keep you updated regarding the testing status from both the State of Wisconsin and CMS.

During this past week there were no positive COVID tests for staff, nor were there any residents with symptoms that needed to be tested. Any staff who have any type of symptoms are required to test. The facility will contact responsible parties if there is a positive COVID test for either residents or staff within 12 hours of the time that we receive the indication of a positive test. This week I was notified that the facility that my family member resides in had two employees test positive for COVID-19. One was a direct care provider and the other employee was not. In the neighboring county, there were a total of 23 individuals, 15 residents and 8 staff who tested positive for COVID-19 in an assisted living facility. Three of the residents have passed away. I am sharing this with you because I want to point out that the incidence of positive tests is increasing all over the state. It is certainly possible that we may have an employee test positive in the future. It is definitely not an indication that the facility is a bad facility, quite the contrary. The nursing

facility that my family member lives in does a great job. It is a wonderful place to live. The Baldwin Care Center and other nursing facilities are doing the best that they can to keep this virus at bay so it does not get a chance to get to the vulnerable population that we care for. We have only had one employee test positive at the Baldwin Care Center and that was in early April when the positivity rate was far lower. The facility continues to quarantine residents for 14 days when they return from a hospital stay or if they have a community exposure from an appointment or contact with a family member. The staff here have done a great job taking precautions in their personal lives to make certain the residents remain safe.



The increased positivity rate in the county and state gives me pause as I am scheduling outdoor visits. At this time, the Medical Director and staff here feel we are taking necessary precautions regarding the outdoor visits. I am trying to find the proper balance in decision-making regarding not only the physical health of residents, but the emotional well being of residents also. I know how important outdoor visits are for residents and family members. As I have indicated previously, visits will cease if we do have a positive case. I want to remind everyone that there is only one exception made for an indoor visit. This is for a compassionate care visit. This circumstance is determined by the facility. It is usually for end of life cases. No one else is allowed to enter any of the facilities on the campus. As I continue to make outdoor visiting schedules, I now have the process down a bit better. I am able to schedule visits for family members every two weeks. I will continue to contact the family member listed as the primary contact to schedule visits. I make decisions on when the visits will be for the next week based on the weather forecast and when the staff are available to monitor visits. So far, I have been able to accommodate all family members with an appointment time.

This week I would like to thank Heidi Dumond for goodies brought for the staff of Birch Haven Assisted Living. I would also like to thank the family of Becky Sempf for treating the staff of Baldwin Care Center and Birch Haven Assisted Living to some delicious bars. Thank you for thinking of us! We appreciate it.



*Eileen LaFavor  
Administrator*

*Charlene Bretl*

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