



9-11-2020

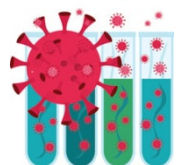
Dear Resident, Family Members and Friends,

This weekly newsletter continues to be sent to responsible parties listed as the primary contact for residents of the Baldwin Care Center. I ask that responsible parties share the information with other family members or direct them to the Baldwin Care Center website at www.baldwincarecenter.com. Each weekly newsletter is posted there. The newsletter is sent electronically to the Birchwood Apartment Manager who makes copies of the newsletter available to all tenants. We have begun distributing copies of the weekly newsletter to responsible parties in the Birchwood Apartments. We feel that the information should be very useful to family members. If there is a question about the content of the newsletter, please feel free to contact me by phone at 715-684-3231, Ext. 103 or via email at elafavor@baldwincarecenter.com. If there is a topic that you would like to know more about that I have not discussed, please let me know.



Testing for COVID-19 continues to be at the forefront. During one of the weekly webinars that the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) presents, they indicated that they are seeking clarification from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) regarding routine testing. The State of Wisconsin DHS is indicating that facilities should document that the point-of-care tests that are supposed to be receiving, have not yet been received. As of this week, the Baldwin Care Center has not received the point-of-care tests from CMS. These are the rapid tests. DHS indicated that more than half of the facilities have received the rapid point-of-care tests. The State of Wisconsin Division of Quality Assurance (DQA) continues to contact nursing facilities to assign them to a laboratory that they will be working with to be compliant with the every two week testing. Seventeen nursing facilities in the state have completed a pilot testing program with the laboratories. Fifty-five facilities have recently been added. As of this date, the Baldwin Care Center has not been contacted by the State of Wisconsin DQA regarding a laboratory assignment. It sounds like testing availability is going to be limited to bi-weekly testing, even though CMS was indicating that testing should be more frequent than bi-weekly if the positivity rate in that county was high. The positivity rate in St. Croix County continues to be at a relatively high level. CMS released a document this week with each county's positivity rates and how much testing is required based on that list. Each county is either in a high positivity zone, medium or low. The low positivity rates are considered 10% must test twice weekly. St. Croix County is in the medium positivity category with an average positivity rate over the past seven days of just over 6%. It is difficult to be compliant with the guidelines if testing kits and supplies are not available. The State of Wisconsin continues to tell skilled nursing facilities that they should contact the county Public Health department for outbreak testing. An outbreak is defined as one case of either a staff member or resident.

This past week the State of Wisconsin, Department of Health Services, Division of Quality Assurance released updated testing guidance for Community Based Residential Facilities (CBRF) and Residential Care Apartment Complexes (RCAC) and Adult Family Homes (AFH). Birch Haven Assisted Living is categorized as a CBRF. Birchwood Apartments are categorized as a RCAC. The testing guidance outlines when to test staff and residents. The guidance indicates that staff should be tested when they have symptoms or when they have close contact with someone who tested positive. Residents should also be tested if they have symptoms or when they have close contact with someone who tested positive. If there is a positive case of either a resident or a staff member, local public health should be contacted regarding testing all staff and residents of the particular setting. Outbreak testing is available to either a CBRF or RCAC if there is one positive staff or resident case at no cost. CBRFs or RCACs may choose to conduct asymptomatic testing of staff and/or residents at their own cost. Prior to asymptomatic testing, facilities are encouraged to consider the following guidance to ensure adequate planning and readiness for testing: Has the facility developed a communication plan, including communication and collaboration with the local health department? Does the facility have appropriately trained and/or licensed staff to administer the tests, or has the facility coordinated with another agency to administer the tests? Does the facility have a



dedicated space to administer the tests? Does the facility have a dedicated space to care for residents if they test positive? Does the facility have sufficient availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other supplies? Does the facility have a plan to address staff shortages? All of the facilities on the campus have a plan to care for residents with COVID-19 which includes a space to care for residents with COVID-19. All facilities on the campus have a communication plan with local public health. St. Croix County is lucky to have a great staff at public health that are very involved with both assisted living and nursing facilities in the county. St. Croix County Public Health staff have a regularly scheduled meeting (weekly or bi-weekly), with all of the facilities in the county to discuss current guidelines and discuss any concerns that facilities have. At his time, facilities have an adequate amount of PPE. The facilities have in place a plan to address staff shortages. As was mentioned in a previous newsletter, the staffing situation remains a concern for this campus. We are having a difficult time finding qualified direct care staff including nurses, certified nursing assistants and resident assistants. If you are aware of someone who is looking for employment in a caregiver role, please let them know that Baldwin Care Center Campus is looking for great people.



As Labor Day weekend ended we saw a pretty dramatic change in the weather. The State of Wisconsin still does not have specific guidance regarding indoor visitation. I am continuing to schedule outdoor visits so please plan on dressing for the weather. I did have a discussion with the Medical Director regarding the potential for indoor visits. The evidence suggests that outdoor visits continue to be the safest and pose the lowest risk of transmission of COVID-19. We are in the discussion phases of developing a plan for indoor visitation. I was finally able to schedule an outdoor visit with my brother at a nursing facility in the Eau Claire area for September 23rd. I am hopeful we still have some warmer weather at least through the month of September. I will keep you apprised of the status of indoor visitation.



Last week I forgot to mention a thank you to some volunteers that have been very faithful during this pandemic. Dan and Tricia Van Brunt, who are members of the New Centerville United Methodist Church, made "prayer rocks" for each resident of the campus that wanted one. Thank you so much for your continued support of the residents here. They appreciate knowing that so many people care about them. Thank you to the anonymous donor for the tasty fruit tray from Nilssen's. Thank you to Vicki Bonkrude and Lucy Crosby for the decorated Packer and Viking cookies to celebrate the big game this weekend.

*Eileen LaFavor,
Administrator*

