



Dear Residents, 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 would appreciate it if responsible parties could please share this information with other family members and friends or direct them to the Baldwin Care Center website at www.baldwincarecenter.com. Each weekly newsletter is posted on the website. Birch Haven Assisted Living is also sending the weekly newsletter to family members and responsible parties. The Birchwood Apartment Manager copies the newsletter and provides it to the tenants there. I am hopeful that the newsletter continues to be useful information for everyone. If you ever have a question about the content of the newsletter, please feel free to contact me via email at elafavor@baldwincarecenter.com or by phone at 715-684-3231, Ext. 103. If there is a topic you would like to know more about that I have not discussed, please let me know.



This week I would like to discuss the Infection Prevention and Control Assessment Review (ICAR) that the Baldwin Care Center recently completed. This assessment is available to nursing facilities from the State of Wisconsin. It is a consultative, non-regulatory review of the facility's infection control practices that is held via telephone. It was helpful to complete this to assess how we are doing with state and federal guidance regarding COVID-19. In addition to the two Wisconsin Department of Health (DHS) staff that participated, Dr. Kathleen Findlay, Medical Director and Denise Hague, RN, Director of Nursing (DON) and I participated. The following areas were reviewed: 1. Reporting requirements and plans for testing residents and health care personnel (HCP) 2. Visitor restrictions and non-essential person restrictions 3. Education, monitoring and screening of HCP 4. Education, monitoring and screening and cohorting of residents 5. Availability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and supplies and 6. Infection prevention and control practices. All applicable state and federal guidelines related to all of these areas were reviewed to see if the facility was in compliance. The following is a list of specific recommendations for Baldwin Care Center as a result of the review:

1. The "duckbill" N95 respirators that the facility has in stock require fit-testing before use. The indication was that these types of N95 masks were one size fits all. Fit testing is a process that tests the seal between the N95 and the face. We do have masks fit tested for the team who would be caring for COVID positive residents, should we have any. We will now be fit testing more staff for N95s.
2. Facemasks are required for all staff. Cloth facemasks are not considered Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Direct care staff are wearing surgical masks in addition to almost everyone in the facility. Some cloth masks had been used in conjunction with surgical masks to preserve PPE. Baldwin Care will now have all staff wear a surgical mask every day. The supply chain of masks has become a bit better. Also any visitors such as service personnel who repair items, etc. should be given a clean mask to wear at the facility.
3. The cleaning and disinfecting process for equipment was reviewed. The cleaning /disinfecting wipes that we use indicate that the surface should remain wet for 2 minutes and then let air dry. We were using them to clean the equipment first and then wrapping them with the wipes for 5 minutes. What we were doing was unnecessary.
4. Infection control education for staff is ongoing. Audits are completed for hand washing and donning and doffing PPE. State consultants recommended that the Housekeeping and Nursing departments use a product called Glo germ which will illuminate under UV light showing where germs would reside, so the level of bacteria present could be determined.
5. A recommendation was made to make sure vehicle cleaning is completed before and after each transport for both facility transports and private sector transports.

The consultants conducting the ICAR were very impressed with Dr. Kathleen Findlay's involvement at the facility during the pandemic. Dr. Findlay has provided education to both residents and staff, in addition to caring for all of residents. The State consultants were so impressed that they asked Dr. Findlay to be a part of the weekly webinar to discuss best practice for a Medical Director in a long term care facility. We are incredibly fortunate to have Dr. Findlay here!



This past week, the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services provided an update regarding testing on the weekly webinar. DHS indicated that CMS testing requirements are in effect and those guidelines regarding testing must be followed. They further indicated that lack of access to testing doesn't waive testing. DHS indicated that facilities will either have to get their own testing equipment and supplies or use the point-of-care rapid tests from the federal government. Facilities must find a way to meet the requirement. The frequency of testing for this facility based on the COVID-19 positivity rate in this county is weekly. At the time I was listening to the DHS webinar, Baldwin Care Center had not yet been assigned to a state lab, nor had we received the point-of-care rapid COVID-19 tests from the federal government. DHS did indicate that state testing labs are only able to provide bi-weekly testing. So we would not be in compliance with CMS regulations if we were only using the state lab. The day after listening to the DHS webinar, I was contacted by the state lab we have been assigned to for biweekly testing. I am in the process of setting up an account so that we will be able to order tests. This week the facility received the point-of-care rapid COVID tests. I am somewhat concerned about a false positive result from these tests, but we will begin using them right away to be in compliance with CMS regulations. As always, we will keep you posted regarding any positive COVID-19 tests. At this time the only positive COVID-19 test we have had was an employee that occurred in early April. We are hopeful that this trend continues.

Outdoor visitation will continue for the time being. As I mentioned last week, we have not received specific guidance yet from Wisconsin DHS regarding indoor visitation. The Medical Director is not comfortable beginning indoor visitation without specific guidance from DHS. I am hopeful that the weather will continue to be tolerable enough to be outside. I have a personal reason that I would like the weather to stay mild. My daughter is getting married outside on October 10th. We have had to make some major changes in wedding plans because of COVID-19. My daughter and future son-in-law planned on being married in the same church that his grandparents were married in. Because of COVID-19, they would have only been able to have a total of 30 people in the church. Luckily the reception venue is able to accommodate the wedding ceremony, but only outdoors. So I will continue to pray for good weather.



Responsible parties will find information enclosed regarding the influenza vaccine. It is so important this year to receive the influenza vaccine to protect against the influenza. Influenza has similar symptoms to COVID-19. Please return the enclosed information to the Baldwin Care Center.

This week we would like to thank Maple Leaf Orchard located in Spring Valley. The owners, Mark and Sue Christopher donated apples, apple donuts and apple crisp for our residents to enjoy. I was able to have a piece of their homemade apple crisp and it was delicious. Thank you so much for your generosity!

Eileen LaFavor,
Administrator

