



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 would ask that responsible parties share information with other family members or direct them to the Baldwin Care Center website at www.baldwincarecenter.com. Every weekly newsletter is posted there. This newsletter is then sent electronically to the Birchwood Apartment Manager and the Birch Haven Assisted Living Manager to distribute as they see fit. If there is ever 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 discussed that I have not included, please let me know.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) revised their website on August 25th to indicate that asymptomatic people who have been in close contact with a person with COVID-19 do not necessarily have to test “unless you are a vulnerable individual or if State or local public health officials recommend you have one.” Under the previous guidelines, testing was appropriate for those with recent or suspected exposure, even if they were asymptomatic. This change has left many puzzled. On August 28th the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) formally noted that they continue to recommend that ALL persons who were in close contact with a person infected with COVID-19 (defined as being within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes) should be tested regardless of symptoms. Other states have also indicated continued testing for those who have had close contact with someone with COVID-19.



Testing for COVID-19 continues to be a primary topic. There have been some recent developments on the state and national levels regarding ongoing testing for staff. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently announced sweeping regulatory changes for nursing homes and other providers. Nursing facilities will have to test staff and offer testing to residents, while labs and nursing facilities using point-of-care testing must report diagnostic results. Nursing homes will also have to provide tests to residents during all outbreaks, or if residents show symptoms. Surveyors can cite facilities for noncompliance. Enforcement will be based on the level of noncompliance. Fines for noncompliance will start at \$400 per day and can range up to \$8,000 with termination from the Medicare and Medicaid programs the ultimate threat. Testing frequency would be based on the positivity rate in the specific geographic area. If the positivity rate is below 5%, testing would be required once per month. If the positivity rate is between 5-10% testing would be required once per week. For rates above that testing would be required twice per week. At this time, this facility is unable to comply with the testing requirements because we are unable to secure tests and testing supplies. This facility has not yet received an indication of when we will be receiving the point-of-care rapid tests from CMS. Some of the facilities in the area have received an email from CMS indicating that their tests are on the way and some have actually received the testing supplies and tests. The State of Wisconsin has developed relationships with several other labs. The state regulatory agency, the Division of Quality Assurance (DQA) is in the process of contacting facilities to assign them to a specific lab to assist them with the required testing. Baldwin Care Center has not been contacted by DQA regarding the assignment of a lab.

CMS also recently indicated that they would be beginning to restart regular survey inspections at nursing facilities. CMS had suspended routine annual inspections in late March to focus on infection control inspections and Immediate Jeopardy situations. Immediate Jeopardy means a situation in which the provider’s noncompliance has caused or is likely to cause serious injury, harm, impairment or death to a resident. CMS advises states to prioritize their survey backlog before beginning routine surveys. During the regular weekly webinars with nursing home providers, the State of Wisconsin indicated they were not sure when routine annual inspections would begin. The last routine survey occurred at the Baldwin Care Center in May of 2019. Normally routine surveys are conducted anywhere between 9 and 15 months of the last survey. It will be interesting to see when our next routine survey will occur.

COMPLIANCE
REGULATIONS
GUIDELINES

The outdoor visitation at the Baldwin Care Center continues to go well. This week I want to address some troubling concerns that have arisen about outdoor visitation at Birch Haven Assisted Living. The staff at Birch Haven have indicated that some family members have not followed the Outdoor Visitation Guidance. A copy of the Outdoor Visitation Guidance is included for everyone to review. I have had reports that family members have violated the one person per visit rule. Family members have felt that it is okay to bring both children and pets to visits. Visitors have not stayed in the designated visiting locations. Family members have come to visit on the weekends and met their family members outside with no supervision, where it was reported that physical contact has occurred. All of these are violations of the Visitor responsibilities. As is indicated in the policy, the facility has the right to deny outdoor visitation to residents or visitors that do not comply with the guidance. I cannot impress upon all of you enough that compliance with this policy is very important! It could be a matter of life and death for your family member or other residents if COVID-19 were introduced into this setting. The guidance is there to protect all of the residents and it MUST be adhered to. Birch Haven staff will be reporting any further violations to me and those individuals who choose not to follow the guidance will not be allowed to visit. Please let me know if you have questions regarding the guidance. This guidance was developed based on the recommendations of the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services and input from the Medical Director of the campus. Please know that other facilities have not allowed outdoor visitation yet. I am hopeful that family members appreciate the efforts of the staff of this campus to make these visits possible. The staff of Birch Haven are very frustrated with the noncompliance of family members and we have discussed shutting down the visitation there altogether. Please consider the well being of your resident and all of the other residents when visiting. Nursing facilities and assisted living facilities have not yet received guidance from the State of Wisconsin DHS yet regarding indoor visitation for the upcoming colder months. I will keep you posted regarding that as information becomes available.

I wanted to provide a clarification regarding items being brought to the facility. Clothing that family members bring can be given to residents immediately. Flowers that are delivered can be given to the resident immediately. Items that are in cardboard are still being quarantined for 24 hours. Food items that are brought in by family can be given to a specific resident to eat. Any other food item that is going to be shared with other residents, (example: cookies cakes, etc) does need to be prepared in a licensed kitchen. No food or drink is allowed during outdoor visitations. Just a reminder that if a resident attends a large gathering (wedding or funeral), an appointment or is hospitalized outside of the facility they are quarantined for 14 days upon their return.

A big thank you this week to Dixie Helder for the delicious cookies she made and to an anonymous donor for the cheese and sausage tray for the Baldwin Care Center staff. Thank you for thinking of us! Also thank you to Marley Coe, who is Rozella Fern's great granddaughter, for the cute homemade cards for the residents.

Eileen LaFavor,
Administrator

Thank You
for your Kindness

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Rosemary Range

