



12/31/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We did rapid tests on all residents today throughout the building and did find one more resident on our second-floor unit positive for the virus today. The resident has been moved to the special COVID-19 unit.

We also have learned of 2 new staff who have tested positive. All of this information has been shared with Public Health and DHHS.

All residents and staff will be tested again Monday, or sooner if anyone presents with COVID symptoms. We will update you as always.

Please consider if this is the best time for any visiting; this is for your health as well as for the health of your loved ones. You could spread the virus up to 2 days before noting symptoms in yourself, which also means that a resident you visit could likewise be contagious and spread the virus up to 2 days before any noted symptoms. Our rapid tests are now finding staff and residents before they have any symptoms; many are fully vaccinated as well as boosted. If you intend to visit and you have access to a rapid home test, please take one before you visit as one more precaution to help the spread of this virus at Maplewood.

Yours truly,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



12/30/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We found 2 positive residents today through rapid tests taken due to presenting symptoms. Our COVID wing, which resides on our empty 3rd floor unit, has been stood up so that we can separate these residents from all others. We have completed rapid testing on all residents on the second floor unit, and no other cases were found today. We will continue to test as per Public Health and for any residents who are symptomatic.

I'm disappointed in reading an article in the Sentinel today by O. Belanger that quotes the numbers from the state site. We don't know how the State determines those numbers, and while they may be factually correct, they are the numbers from September forward, and **not** an accurate representation of the current cases at Maplewood. We have always, and will continue to alert families and our staff with updated positive cases very quickly. We could really use the support of the community at this time, because this type of reporting that can hurt the morale of everyone who supports Maplewood.

We continue to urge you to consider if this is the best time for any visiting; this is in consideration of your health as well as for the health of your loved ones. The new variant is believed to be very contagious and you could spread the virus up to 2 days before noting symptoms in yourself, which also means that a resident you visit could likewise be contagious and spread the virus up to 2 days before any noted symptoms.

We will be testing any resident with any symptoms or changes in condition, and will make brief updates through our emails and county website when we find new positive cases in either staff or resident. If this is in fact the Omicron variant, we may quickly see numbers go up.

Ways to mitigate the highly infectious Omicron variant includes wearing masks in crowded spaces (including outdoors where you can't maintain 6 feet from others), keep 6 foot spacing, frequent hand hygiene, using home test kits before going to an indoor function with friends/family, and getting your booster shot as soon as you are eligible.

Booking your booster through the local pharmacies is one option, or to find a vaccination location near you visit <https://www.vaccines.gov/>, call 1-800-232-0233 or text your zip code to 438829 (GET VAX). There is a fixed site open to walk-ins in Claremont at the former NH state liquor store (367 Washington St) M-F 10am – 7pm, Sat 9am-2pm, closed Sunday.

Our ongoing post-visit reminder; **if you develop any of the concerning symptoms or are diagnosed with COVID-19 within the few days** after your visit PLEASE call us so that we can put measures into place. We all need to work together to manage this virus and its impacts to all residents and staff.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



12/29/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

All resident tests are negative for this week. We have identified 5 COVID-19 positive staff. There is also a staff person out with positive family members; we imagine this to be a presumptive positive as well. There remain 2 additional staff that tested outside of MNH; results are pending. These cases could be a reflection of Christmas family get-togethers; we all need to self-monitor and get tested for any symptoms. We are testing essentially all residents and the majority of staff many days per week based on Public Health timelines. We remain in constant contact with Public Health and expect this to be the case for many weeks to come. We will update you with any new findings as always. Direct care staff continues to wear full PPE when giving direct care to any residents on quarantine. Visitors must wear a mask and goggles at all times inside Maplewood. Please consider limiting your visits and imagining you are all contagious. We know that 2 days prior to any symptoms, one can easily spread this virus. Some of our positive cases involve fully vaccinated AND boosted individuals.

I mentioned the CDC health worker guidance in my last letter. Since that time, public guidance has also been announced. There are many differences and the CDC guidance for healthcare is much stricter including many caveats. Our employee health and infection prevention nurses will work with our staff on 'return to work' criteria on an individual basis per the stricter rules. As to visitors; please avoid visiting until you are at least 10 days from knowing you have tested positive in order to be as careful as you can to protect the loved one you intend to visit.

Ways to mitigate the highly infectious Omicron variant includes wearing masks in crowded spaces (including outdoors where you can't maintain 6 feet from others), keep 6 foot spacing, frequent hand hygiene, using home test kits before going to an indoor function with friends/family, and getting your booster shot as soon as you are eligible.

Booking your booster through the local pharmacies is one option, or to find a vaccination location near you visit <https://www.vaccines.gov/>, call 1-800-232-0233 or text your zip code to 438829 (GET VAX). There is a fixed site open to walk-ins in Claremont at the former NH state liquor store (367 Washington St) M-F 10am – 7pm, Sat 9am-2pm, closed Sunday.

Our ongoing post-visit reminder; **if you develop any of the concerning symptoms or are diagnosed with COVID-19 within the few days** after your visit PLEASE call us so that we can put measures into place. We all need to work together to manage this virus and its impacts to all residents and staff.

Wishing everyone a brighter 2022. Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



12/27/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

A new direct care staff member has just alerted us to a positive test from a home testing kit; they last worked this past weekend. Additionally we know of 7 other staff who are reporting symptoms consistent with this virus, and all are out awaiting test results. All residents tested negative last week, and except for the two reported, all other staff also tested negative last week. We continue response testing today which involves all residents and nearly all staff. We are in constant contact with Public Health and complete any testing as directed. We will update you with any new findings as always. Direct care staff continues to wear full PPE when giving direct care to any residents on quarantine. Visitors must wear a mask and goggles at all times during any visit at Maplewood.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention(CDC) has issued interim guidance for healthcare workers in anticipation of the predicted impact of the Omicron variant – which is said to be more infectious, though possibly less severe. We are analyzing the information to integrate it into our policies and practices in the coming weeks.

Ways to mitigate the highly infectious Omicron variant includes wearing masks in crowded spaces (including outdoors where you can't maintain 6 feet from others), keep 6 foot spacing, frequent hand hygiene, using home test kits before going to an indoor function with friends/family, and getting your booster shot as soon as you are eligible.

Booking your booster through the local pharmacies is one option, or to find a vaccination location near you visit <https://www.vaccines.gov/>, call 1-800-232-0233 or text your zip code to 438829 (GET VAX). There is a fixed site open to walk-ins in Claremont at the former NH state liquor store (367 Washington St) M-F 10am – 7pm, Sat 9am-2pm, closed Sunday.

Our ongoing post-visit reminder; **if you develop any of the concerning symptoms or are diagnosed with COVID-19 within the few days** after your visit PLEASE call us so that we can put measures into place. We all need to work together to manage this virus and its impacts to all residents and staff.

Wishing everyone a brighter 2022. Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



12/22/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have identified 2 direct care staff members who have tested positive this week. Public Health advises us to quarantine all residents at this point, and to continue testing of all applicable residents and staff at the specific time intervals as Public Health has directed. We continue to wear full PPE when giving direct care to any residents on quarantine, and visitors must wear a mask and goggles at all times during the visit.

We tested residents and staff through the Public Health testing labs on Monday, but have not yet received those results. We will update you with any new finding as always.

All of our residents are fully vaccinated and all who were eligible were given a booster dose in November. Almost all of our staff is vaccinated with just a few who have exemptions. At this time we are encouraging all eligible staff to get a booster dose as well. Visitors who are fully vaccinated and are at least 2 months from having had their J&J shot, or 6 months from either the Pfizer or Moderna shots, are eligible and ought to plan for a booster now to help in any way possible against the Omicron variant that has already been reported/found in our county.

Booking your booster through the local pharmacies is one option, or to find a vaccination location near you visit <https://www.vaccines.gov/>, call 1-800-232-0233 or text your zip code to 438829 (GET VAX). There is a fixed site open to walk-ins in Claremont at the former NH state liquor store (367 Washington St) M-F 10am – 7pm, Sat 9am-2pm, closed Sunday.

Our ongoing post-visit reminder; **if you develop any of the concerning symptoms or are diagnosed with COVID-19 within the few days** after your visit PLEASE call us so that we can put measures into place. We all need to work together to manage this virus and its impacts to all residents and staff.

May your holidays be filled with joy and hope. Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



12/16/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

Our testing this week has uncovered an asymptomatic direct care staff member. This person has been working on our second floor, so this unit will continue to remain on quarantine and staff will continue to wear full PPE for direct care of residents. There were no other cases, so Public Health has advised us that we can take impacted residents from 4th floor and TLC off quarantine precautions this week-end.

We completed moving 3rd floor residents to either 2nd or 4th last week. We are working on smoothing out the new routines and staff is getting to know the new environments. When all quarantine restrictions are lifted, the residents will be able to meet their new neighbors. Everyone is looking forward to coming out of quarantine and being able to forgo wearing the additional PPE.

As we approach Christmas, a few reminders:

- Clothing needs to be marked and home markers don't survive our wash cycle; please bring the item to the receptionist who will alert laundry so it can be properly marked and inventoried. If you send a gift of clothing and it goes directly to the resident, the risk is great that it won't get marked and this is how clothing can get 'lost' – particularly new items
- Non-clothing items/gifts; after your loved one has received these gifts, please bring items to the receptionist who will notify our Facilities Dept to heat treat, tag and check any electronic items prior to return to the resident's room
- Battery operated decorations are a good choice for resident rooms
- Live greens i.e. wreaths are not allowed (only flower arrangements or plants)
- No extension cords or multi-plugs are permissible under fire-related codes

Our ongoing post-visit reminder; **if you develop any of the concerning symptoms or are diagnosed with COVID-19 within the few days** after your visit PLEASE call us so that we can put measures into place. We all need to work together to manage this virus and its impacts to all residents and staff.

Wishing you peace and health this holiday season. Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



12/1/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

All tests for residents and staff who work on resident units this week have been negative. There was an asymptomatic positive staff in a support department that has no resident contact. Public Health has alerted us that our units are no longer under quarantine, and our staff at this time does not need to wear additional PPE for resident care unless a particular resident is on specific precautions.

Over Thanksgiving, we noted many visitors. Please remember to **contact us if you develop any of the concerning symptoms or are diagnosed with COVID-19 within the few days** after your visit so that we can put measures into place to try to contain a potential outbreak. We really need you to be our partners in managing this virus and its impacts to all residents and staff.

You may have heard about the court ruling for a temporary injunction blocking for now the CMS vaccination mandate for all healthcare personnel. We have continued our work with staff that have submitted exemption requests, and otherwise continue to encourage and assist the others to get vaccinated. We have already lost some staff ahead of this ruling due to the vaccine mandate, and this temporary block against CMS does not change our situation for needing to close a floor at this time.

We continue to plan for moving residents from our 3rd floor to either the 2nd or 4th floors next week. Social workers have been talking with applicable residents/families as we prepare. Our target move dates are next week, likely Tuesday and additionally Wednesday if needed. We will move the resident, personal furniture and clothing initially, and plan for moving anything on the walls in the days afterwards.

Community transmission remains very high and hospitals are reported to be sending some patients out of state due to having capacity issues. We continue to encourage everyone to get vaccinated and boosted, to limit indoor times in congregate settings while wearing masks, frequent hand hygiene and keeping 6 foot spacing from others.

Wishing you peace and health as we begin this holiday season. Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



11/24/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

All tests for residents and staff this week have been negative. As always, we have a few staff out with related symptoms and being tested. We will update you to new cases as we learn of them.

When the vaccine mandate for health care facilities was first announced, we alerted you in the 8/26/21 letter of our concern about losing a number of staff. We are getting a better idea by the day of expected staff loss on account of the vaccine mandate. We are now, sadly, at the moment where we must proceed in redistributing a whole unit to continue the care level as everyone is accustomed to at Maplewood. The nursing and social services staff is going through thoughtful planning and consideration to best meet the needs of each resident. Next week, social workers or nurses will reach out to impacted residents and families. Our goal is to make these necessary moves the week of December 6th.

We continue **NOT to recommend visits during outbreak**...that said residents may receive visitors. If the resident is on any precaution based care, we would appreciate a call ahead so that we can educate you as required regarding risks, and prepare you for when you come in as to what to expect.

The most important information from the 'Visitor Expectations' includes:

- masks must be worn at all times inside the facility
- you are not permitted to eat/drink during the visit (must keep mask on)
- visits must be in the resident room
- You are not permitted to move about the facility with the resident
- You can't attend activities or wander around the nursing home

We would ask that you call ahead if you expect a large number of visitors so that we can arrange for a larger room. We continue to advise you of the risk of getting ill yourselves should you choose to visit during outbreak and/or while your loved one is ill.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator

11/19/21



Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have learned of 2 staff that have tested positive since our last letter. All resident tests have been negative since my last correspondence.

Public Health has asked that we test all residents (except for 4th open) early on Monday morning as they will be closed for Thanksgiving and the following weekend. We will continue to test staff next week using our rapid tests and/or our other contract lab.

We continue **NOT to recommend visits during outbreak**...that said residents may receive visitors. If the resident is in the COVID-19 unit or on any other precaution based care, we would appreciate a call ahead so that we can educate you as required regarding risks, and prepare you for when you come in as to what to expect.

Please review the "Visitor Expectations Nov 2021 version" by the podium as you enter to understand what is expected. The most important information to know includes:

- masks must be worn at all times inside the facility
- you are not permitted to eat/drink during the visit (must keep mask on)
- visits must be in the resident room
- You are not permitted to move about the facility with the resident
- You can't attend activities or wander around the nursing home

We would ask that you call ahead if you expect a large number of visitors so that we can arrange for a room that can manage the 6 foot spacing to uphold the core principles of infection prevention as required by CMS. You will need to wear the proper PPE to enter the room of any resident on precautions; you will see a 'STOP' sign on their door and a PPE cart beside the room. Staff can assist you to know which PPE you need to wear and how to put it on and take it off properly. We are advising you of the risk of getting ill yourselves should you choose to visit during outbreak and/or while your loved one is ill.

The American Health Care Association produced a 26 minute documentary style film showing the impact of the pandemic from inside 2 nursing homes. One is the Edgewood Center in Portsmouth. It was emotional to watch, and captured some of what we too have experienced at Maplewood: https://youtu.be/KtK_RIIyMpA

Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator

11/19/21



Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

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Public Health has asked that we test all residents (except for 4th open) early on Monday morning as they will be closed for Thanksgiving and the following weekend. We will continue to test staff next week using our rapid tests and/or our other contract lab.

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Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator

11/17/21



Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have learned of 2 new staff that have tested positive for COVID-19 through our routine testing. At this point, 76% of our reported cases since July have been in fully vaccinated individuals. We know that the vaccine wanes after time and we continue to encourage all eligible individuals to become vaccinated or boosted as soon as possible.

All eligible residents received their booster shot 2 weeks ago, and the full efficacy of the booster should now be achieved. We will see going forward from this date the effectiveness of the booster for our residents should they be exposed to the virus. Testing results since my last correspondence have been negative for all residents.

We continue to work with Public Health who advises us when to test various units based on case counts from the prior week. We continue with the additional testing dates we have implemented for our staff (up to 3 times per week).

I've endeavored to keep Maplewood and all residents/families/responsible parties up to date with the latest rules, policy changes, positive cases and more these past 20 months. Late on Friday, our team had just been updated by Public Health who recommended we **not** open to visits just yet. Within an hour of this conversation, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) made an announcement about opening up visitation to all nursing homes across the country. It's difficult to understand why such a huge announcement would be made late in the afternoon on a Friday giving little time for homes to review the rule, change policies and train all staff in order to correctly implement this major change in direction regardless of outbreak status.

This past summer when our community transmission numbers were low, fully open visitation would have been very welcomed. Given the ongoing increases in our community transmission of COVID-19, combined with our outbreak status and then adding on the preparations we are making for requiring all staff to achieve full vaccination, this does not seem the best time to open fully to visitation. The rule does allow us to discourage open visitation due to our status, however, if you do wish to visit, we can only educate you about your risks when coming into a building with active COVID, and continue to screen you prior to entry.

All staff/contractors and volunteers are days away from requiring vaccination, in contrast, long term care Ombudsmen and surveyors will not be required to be vaccinated, nor are we permitted to ask about their vaccination status. CMS does expect facilities to educate and encourage visitors to become vaccinated, boosted, AND CMS expects facilities to encourage visitors to have a negative COVID-19 test within 2-3 days of a visit, as well as consider testing visitors. Allowing visitors to come in even through an outbreak or high community transmission rates with only requiring we get your temperature and your assurance that you are not actively ill, nor have been asked to quarantine, makes me question the safety of this CMS rule given our current situation.

While **NOT recommended during outbreak**, residents may receive visitors. If the resident is in the COVID-19 unit or on any other precaution based care, we would appreciate a call ahead so that we can educate you as required regarding risks, and prepare you for when you come in as to what to expect.

Please refer to the text/document "Visitor Expectations Nov 2021 version" to understand what is expected. The most important information to know includes:

- masks must be worn at all times inside the facility
- you are not permitted to eat/drink during the visit (must keep mask on)
- visits must be in the resident room
- You are not permitted to move about the facility with the resident
- You can't attend activities or wander around the nursing home

We would ask that you call ahead if you expect a large number of visitors so that we can arrange for a room that can manage the 6 foot spacing. You will need to wear the proper PPE to enter the room of any resident on quarantine or precautions, and you will need to accept the risk of getting ill yourselves should you choose to visit during outbreak and/or while your loved one is ill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathryn Kindopp' followed by a stylized monogram or initials.

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



11/12/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have learned of a new staff that has tested positive for COVID-19. They last worked on 2nd floor on 11/9, later became symptomatic and their test has returned positive today. I have mentioned this previously, but want to reiterate that any staff with any associated symptom is not to come to work, and to prioritize getting tested. In recent weeks, we seem to have 2 to 3 staff out on any given day with symptoms associated with this virus. Most tests return negative, however, we will update you as we learn of any new positive cases.

We are testing 2nd floor residents today via the PCR test that is sent to the Public Health lab. Additionally, we are testing all staff today with the PCR test being sent to our contracted lab (MAKO) as previously mentioned.

We remind you that compassionate care visits are always permissible.

We always work with Public Health and the Department of Health and Human Services to report our updates and continue to follow their guidance for mitigation strategies. Our PPE levels remain strong, we have plenty of rapid tests on hand, and despite the high community transmission levels, we are receiving the lab results from the PCR tests within 2 days of sending them to the Public Health labs.

We have reported several positive cases to you in the recent few weeks and I can tell you that in every single case, staff/residents have been fully vaccinated. At this time, we are even beginning to report to you cases that have also received the booster dose. This is mentioned to highlight how transmissible the Delta variant is.

The incubation period for this virus can be up to 14 days, and we have experienced very long times between what may have been a possible exposure and initial symptoms. We appreciate all in our community who continue to wear masks in indoor spaces, maintain 6 foot distancing, and continue with frequent hand hygiene. Vaccination status can't completely prevent anyone from catching or passing this virus on, but can mitigate some of the more serious possible outcomes. We continue to recommend vaccinations as well as booster doses to all who are able to receive them.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



11/10/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

Tests taken and sent to Public Health on Monday have all returned, and one more resident in TLC has been found to be positive. We are moving this resident to our COVID-19 unit. TLC has operated under quarantine since our first case was found and staff has been wearing all required PPE for all resident care.

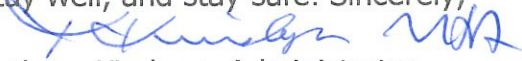
Public Health and the Department of Health and Human Services are working with us through this outbreak and continue to guide us on timing of PCR testing for the impacted units.

We will continue with all planned testing as outlined in the previous correspondence.

We are taking these additional measures with the goal to catch any new cases as early as possible and mitigate the spread of this virus that is so prevalent in our surrounding community.

We remind you that compassionate care visits are always permissible.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,


Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator

11/10/21



Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We are announcing 2 new resident COVID-19 cases which are on our second floor. As per our plan, we do rapid tests on any symptomatic resident; we found a resident on second floor who tested positive on 11/9/21. We then tested all other residents on 2nd floor using the rapid tests yesterday and found there was one more resident – for the total of 2. The residents were immediately moved to the COVID wing and the whole floor was placed on quarantine. Personal protective equipment (PPE) carts were deployed throughout the unit and staff is wearing full PPE for any resident care.

We have updated Public Health and the Department of Health and Human Services, and they have instructed us to complete the PCR testing later this week for second floor. We will plan to continue using the rapid tests to catch any other positive cases as soon as possible as we wait for the PCR testing/results for second floor.


We tested all staff via PCR last Friday, and there were no new cases. All staff and residents associated with third floor and the TLC units were tested Monday via PCR. We are beginning to receive those results now. We will update you with any new positive findings. We will additionally complete another round of PCR tests on all staff on Friday. We are taking these additional measures with the goal to catch any new cases as early as possible and mitigate the spread of this virus that is so prevalent in our surrounding community.

We remind you that compassionate care visits are always permissible.

Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) finalized their staff vaccine requirement last week, and we completed our policy on mandatory staff vaccination. Our human resource department is meeting individually with the remaining unvaccinated staff. CMS requires facilities to allow for exemptions (such as recognized medical conditions for which vaccinations are contraindicated), and we will consider those staff who may apply for an exemption in accordance with applicable federal law. In all cases, we are making it clear to staff that barring an approved exemption, their only remaining choice is to get vaccinated by early December or give us their notice. We are working to support our staff during this difficult and emotional time. We would prefer not to lose our staff; however, failure to follow the CMS rules has penalties including payment termination up to and including potential facility closure.

Pfizer is now seeking approval for its booster for all individuals 18 and over. We certainly encourage all visitors to be fully vaccinated including booster doses as applicable. Whenever indoors, please choose to wear a mask, keep 6 foot distancing and wash your hands frequently.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,


Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator

11/5/21



Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have learned of another staff having tested positive for COVID-19. They had last worked in our TLC unit on 10/28, and noted symptoms within days. They had a test that returned early this week as negative. They continued to have symptoms, so we kept them out and sent them for another test. We were notified yesterday that it returned positive. We have already been testing all TLC residents and staff, and this doesn't change our current course of action at this time.

We did receive back the missing tests mentioned 11/3; they are all negative. We continue with rapid tests daily in our TLC unit to help with the earliest possible identification of any other case(s). We have our next PCR testing through Public Health scheduled for this coming Monday for applicable residents and staff. Additionally, we added a PCR based test today to include all staff at MNH even if they are fully vaccinated. The community transmission in our county is very high, and we need to determine if there are any asymptomatic carriers we could be missing.

We continue to report all cases to Public Health and the Department of Health and Human Services. We have good amounts of PPE and plenty of the rapid tests to administer when any resident presents with COVID symptoms. We remind you that compassionate care visits are always permissible.

At this time, all residents remain fully vaccinated, and all but a few were able to receive their booster dose this week. Our staff vaccination rate is approximately 85%, and CMS has come out with their vaccination mandate. We are working to create the required policies and have already alerted all staff about the finalized mandate and associated dates. There are exemptions such as for those who have had allergic reactions, however, there is not an option to test in lieu of the mandate.

We certainly encourage all visitors to be fully vaccinated plus get their boosters as allowable regarding timing. Regardless of vaccination status, it is recommended to wear masks and keep 6 feet spacing when indoors with non-household people. Even as a visitor, you could be contagious (about 48 hours before symptoms) and unwittingly bring it to Maplewood. Please approach your visit as though you/anyone around you is ill without yet knowing it, and safeguard accordingly.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator

11/3/21



Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

All testing for this week is in except for 3 tests. Since my report yesterday, we have found a positive staff member that works on TLC and one additional resident on TLC. All other residents and staff were negative. TLC remains quarantined and staff will remain in full PPE for any resident care until further notice. We continue with rapid tests that can at times help identify a positive case while awaiting the lab based PCR tests. This also enables us to move affected residents as soon as possible to the COVID wing. As mentioned, compassionate care visits are always permissible; we will alert you once any unit may resume scheduling regular visits.

We have good amounts of PPE and plenty of the rapid tests to administer when any resident presents with COVID symptoms.

Each new case is immediately reported to Public Health as well as the Department of Health and Human Services. We work with them to ensure we are all using the latest information known that may help mitigate the spread of the virus. On any given day, we are averaging about 3 staff out for testing due to one of the following; new symptom onset that could be associated with the virus, household member who is sick or some other significant virus exposure. Nearly all of our recent positive cases are in fully vaccinated individuals including staff. We are encouraging those few remaining staff to get vaccinated, and are now encouraging all who have been vaccinated to get the booster dose.

Today, we held a successful booster vaccine clinic. CVS pharmacists were able to inoculate all eligible and consenting residents. Residents who have not yet had 6 months since their Pfizer or Moderna initial vaccine series will be monitored and assisted with a booster dose at the appropriate time if they so choose. We were able to offer boosters to many staff as well. Some staff had already arranged for their own booster doses in the community.

It's frustrating to watch the ongoing increase in COVID numbers in our community. Regardless of vaccination status, it is recommended to wear masks and keep 6 feet spacing when indoors with non-household people. The tricky part is that one is contagious about 48 hours before symptoms. A strategy to consider is to imagine you/anyone around you may be ill without yet knowing it, and safeguard accordingly.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator

11/2/21



Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have found 3 positive residents on our TLC unit. All have been moved to our COVID wing. TLC remains quarantined and staff is in full PPE for any resident care. We are cancelling all the scheduled resident visits on all floors at this time, though compassionate care visits are always permissible.

We are doing rapid tests as well as PCR tests for all residents and staff on this unit to identify any other cases. We are also expanding and preparing to PCR test all staff regardless of vaccination status throughout the nursing home in order to identify who may be ill without symptoms. PCR tests are the most accurate tests and can identify individuals who are not yet showing symptoms, including those who never show symptoms. PCR tests are sent out to a lab for processing. We have plenty of the rapid tests and continue to use them when any resident presents with COVID symptoms.

As always, we are working with Public Health and the Department of Health and Human Services to review updated information and ensure we are doing all that is recommended to contain and prevent further infections. Public Health could advise us to do broader resident/unit testing; we will follow any new guidance they may give us.

The booster vaccine clinic remains scheduled for tomorrow, Wed Nov 3rd. All the eligible and consenting residents will receive their vaccine on that day.

We know many of you have shared with us your vaccination status, and we want you to know that you may be eligible for a booster. For those 18 or over and associated with long term care; once you are at least 2 months past a J&J shot, or 6 months since the Pfizer or Moderna shots, it is recommended to get a one-shot booster. You can get the same formulation, or you can mix and match as supported by CDC. Some studies have shown that the effectiveness of the initial shots wanes after 6 months. Since July, 75% of our positive cases (in both staff and residents) have been fully vaccinated. Unfortunately many nursing homes are experiencing outbreaks despite residents having been fully vaccinated. Outbreaks are usually a sign of high community transmission rates, and the waning effectiveness of the vaccine is likely contributing.

The predicted fall COVID surge in New Hampshire continues to grow. Regardless of vaccination status, it is recommended to wear masks and keep 6 feet spacing when indoors with non-household people. The tricky part is that one is contagious about 48 hours before symptoms. A strategy to consider is to imagine you/anyone around you may be ill without yet knowing it, and safeguard accordingly.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



10/29/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have found a positive resident on our TLC unit. The resident has been moved to our COVID wing, and TLC is quarantined and staff is in full PPE for any resident care. We have 2 staff members who have called out this week, and are getting tested after community based COVID exposures. We will send additional correspondence upon learning of any other positive case(s).

We have begun rapid testing all residents and staff on this unit, and will continue with the PCR tests next week. PCR tests are the most accurate tests particularly when done a specific number of days after possible exposure; they can identify individuals who are not yet showing symptoms. PCR tests are sent out to a lab for processing.

At this time, only compassionate care visits can occur on TLC and 3rd floor. We continue to work with Public Health and the Department of Health and Human Services to review our applied protocols to ensure we are doing all that is recommended to contain and prevent further infections. Public Health could advise us to do broader testing or include more units; we will follow any new guidance they may give us.

To schedule nursing home visits for 2nd, call Jeannie Crowder at 603-283-9409, or call Christine Gowen at 399-7348 to schedule visits in assisted living.

The Westmoreland Fire Department responded to smoke in an empty/unoccupied resident room on TLC on 10/28/21. No residents were near this area, and staff responded as per training to close all doors/windows and account for all residents and staff. We had technicians from the company that installed the room heating/cooling units come in this morning and they found this unit had a bad motor. The unit appropriately shut itself down, but it did produce smoke that staff contained to this room. The unit has since been replaced with a brand new one.

The booster vaccine clinic remains scheduled for next Wednesday Nov 3rd. All the eligible and consenting residents will receive their vaccine on that day.

The predicted fall COVID surge in New Hampshire continues to grow. Regardless of vaccination status, it is recommended to wear masks and keep 6 feet spacing when indoors with non-household people. The tricky part is that one is contagious about 48 hours before symptoms. A strategy to consider is to imagine you/anyone around you may be ill without yet knowing it, and safeguard accordingly.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



10/24/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

A part time worker has let us know that they have had a household contact with a positive case, and they have now tested positive. They last worked 10/16, and came in last week only as part of our testing protocol (they tested negative last week). The time when they became symptomatic was well past their last shift worked. Based on the known source and the length of time since they were last in contact with residents, we are not changing our current plans or course of action. We will review this information and our decisions with Public Health tomorrow, and we are simply letting you know about this case. We will update you if we are given new directives that impact you.

As per plan, we will be testing 3rd floor residents and applicable staff tomorrow, and we continue to test all unvaccinated staff 3 times per week. Staff continues to alert us to any symptoms; they remain out of work and are directed to go for testing. We will alert you to new cases.

To schedule nursing home visits for 2nd, 4th and TLC; call Jeannie Crowder at 603-283-9409, or call Christine Gowen at 399-7348 to schedule visits in assisted living.

The positive cases in our county continue to rise, and I highly recommend masking when indoors with non-household members. Some studies I have read have indicated a waning immunity for elders or those who are immunocompromised. Six months after becoming fully vaccinated, one study reported about a 57% efficacy in older adults/immunocompromised individuals, and many breakthrough cases have been reported. Getting a booster vaccine has been recommended for most of us associated with or anyone visiting long term care residents.

Please remember to report any signs/symptoms within 2 days of a visit (including if you test positive shortly after a visit) so that we may react accordingly to help safeguard our residents and staff.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



10/24/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

A part time worker has let us know that they have had a household contact with a positive case, and they have now tested positive. They last worked 10/16, and came in last week only as part of our testing protocol (they tested negative last week). The time when they became symptomatic was well past their last shift worked. Based on the known source and the length of time since they were last in contact with residents, we are not changing our current plans or course of action. We will review this information and our decisions with Public Health tomorrow, and we are simply letting you know about this case. We will update you if we are given new directives that impact you.

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To schedule nursing home visits for 2nd, 4th and TLC; call Jeannie Crowder at 603-283-9409, or call Christine Gowen at 399-7348 to schedule visits in assisted living.

The positive cases in our county continue to rise, and I highly recommend masking when indoors with non-household members. Some studies I have read have indicated a waning immunity for elders or those who are immunocompromised. Six months after becoming fully vaccinated, one study reported about a 57% efficacy in older adults/immunocompromised individuals, and many breakthrough cases have been reported. Getting a booster vaccine has been recommended for most of us associated with or anyone visiting long term care residents.

Please remember to report any signs/symptoms within 2 days of a visit (including if you test positive shortly after a visit) so that we may react accordingly to help safeguard our residents and staff.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



10/22/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

ALL residents and ALL staff are negative from this weeks' round of testing. This means we can resume usual operations for 2nd floor, 4th floor and TLC. We do need to continue with testing and our outbreak protocols for our 3rd floor residents and staff. All residents on that unit and applicable staff will have another round of the PCR tests on Monday. We continue to keep any staff out with any symptom associated with COVID-19, and at any given time we are usually awaiting a test result being done externally for one or more of our staff. Cheshire County continues to have high transmission rates with many new positive cases found daily.

To schedule nursing home visits for 2nd, 4th and TLC; call Jeannie Crowder at 603-283-9409, or call Christine Gowen at 399-7348 to schedule visits in assisted living.

The CDC announcement yesterday now includes boosters for Moderna and the J&J vaccines. This will allow us to offer boosters to a couple more applicable residents. We will work with those impacted to offer the booster during our scheduled vaccination clinic on Wednesday Nov 3, 2021.

Last week an issue with our TV reception was brought to our attention. Between our maintenance staff and the service provider, we were able to resolve the issue on Sunday. We apologize for any frustrations our residents experienced.

We postponed our second of 2 annual disaster drills due to being in 'outbreak', and we will come up with a date between now and the end of the year.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



10/18/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have learned of a new staff positive result; this direct care member last worked 10/12, then became symptomatic and went for testing outside of MNH; results were shared with us last evening. The safety of all of our residents and staff is our top priority, and we continue to do everything possible to stop the spread of this virus at Maplewood. We have updated Public Health and DHHS.

We are testing all residents and staff as required to find as quickly as possible any pre-symptomatic individuals. You know that anyone entering MNH must pass screening that includes temperature taking and symptom checks. We are testing staff up to 3 times per week, and staff knows not to come to work with any symptoms and we continue to direct them to get tested as indicated. We are seeing a longer wait for these external tests to happen and results to come back to us. The challenge of this virus remains that it is highly infectious – particularly the Delta strain. An individual can have no symptoms but be able to transmit COVID-19 upwards of 48 hours prior to the first symptom. Some individuals don't ever exhibit symptoms, but could be transmitting the virus. Fully vaccinated individuals can also get this virus and transmit it.

At this point, 70% of the reported positive individuals since July associated with MNH have been fully vaccinated. Maplewood held our first vaccine clinics over 6 months ago for both staff and residents. The efficacy of the vaccine has been studied and is reported to be less effective starting around the 6 month period. This is part of the reason why the vaccine boosters have been approved (more news is believed to be coming this week about Moderna and Johnson and Johnson). We are thankful to be able to offer a booster shot on Nov 3rd to our residents and staff.

Only compassionate care/end of life visits are permissible at this time. We always have Face Time and similar visit options available.

Please continue to help us by sharing what you know with your extended family; you are our primary contact. We continue to appreciate your support and understanding. Transmission rates continue to climb for our community; please wear your masks when you are at indoor venues other than your own home, and consider masking for large outdoor gatherings where you may not be able to maintain a 6 foot distance from others.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



10/15/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

The results from staff and resident testing this week have all been received and have found 1 resident positive for COVID-19. The safety of all of our residents and staff is our top priority, and we are doing everything possible to stop the spread of this virus at Maplewood. We have been in close communication with Public Health and DHHS to ensure we are following their guidance and taking all the appropriate steps. Residents have stayed in their rooms and staff has been using full PPE for all care this week. All residents are fully vaccinated, and breakthrough cases can and do occur. Over half of the cases we have reported since July have been individuals who have been fully vaccinated. Public Health and DHHS have been updated.

We stood up our dedicated COVID wing on 3rd floor, which is completely separated from all other staff and residents. Staff assigned will be dedicated to the COVID wing.

Our PPE levels remain strong, and we continue all infection prevention efforts. Despite reports within our state of difficulties with having sufficient testing supplies, we have not had those issues here. We have a good supply of rapid tests and the tests we send out to Public Health are returning in the usual amount of time.

We will continue to halt our usually scheduled visits and will update you at least weekly. Compassionate care/end of life visits are always permissible, and you would call to schedule them. We always have Face Time and similar visit options available.

We will always communicate with you as the primary responsible party about your loved one here at Maplewood. You can help us most by sharing what you know with your extended family. We continue to appreciate your support and understanding. Our community has had widespread transmission rates for many weeks and due to this, we continue to encourage you to wear a mask in occupied indoor spaces regardless of your vaccination status. Many individuals vaccinated for over 6 months with the Pfizer vaccine (and Moderna is just being approved for a booster as well) may be eligible for a booster; you can check with local pharmacies to see if you qualify.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



10/12/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have found 2 confirmed but unconnected staff that have tested positive for COVID-19. One is a part time non-clinical member who last worked 13 days before the test result, and the other is a part time clinical member who last worked 8 days before the test result. Public Health has advised us to test the residents on the corresponding units. We must halt visits and Public Health will advise us after the first round of testing if we can open any units to visits due to the length of time between last worked day and positive testing.

As a reminder, we have set the date of Wednesday Nov 3, 2021 for a COVID-19 booster shot for any qualifying resident who wishes to receive it. I know the social workers have been in touch with many of you already to discuss your preference, and will follow up with any necessary documents/consents.

We are seeing some applicants since instituting our new 'minimum' starting wage at Maplewood of \$15.00/hour for entry level positions. Please help get the word out. We still need housekeepers and dietary aides but mostly we need LNA's and nurses. Sign on bonuses are available for most positions (ie \$2,000 bonus for dietary staff at this time). All new employees must be vaccinated or have begun this process. We continue to watch for the specific vaccination mandate which we will have to follow once CMS issues its final rule/mandate. We continue in our efforts to assist remaining staff to get vaccinated, and currently test unvaccinated staff 3 times per week. Since July, over half of our reported positives have been fully vaccinated. We highly recommend even fully vaccinated individuals continue to wear masks in public indoor spaces and wash hands frequently.

We have a tentative date coming up for our second of 2 annual disaster drills. As mentioned previously, this drill will test our staff's immediate response to one of our policies. If any visitors are in the building at the time, you may hear a paged announcement about the event and we will clearly state that it's a drill. You may be instructed by the overhead page and/or staff to do something specific. Play along and help us practice our policy if you happen to be present.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



9/30/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

ALL residents and ALL staff are negative from this weeks' round of testing. This means we have had 2 straight weeks of negative tests and can resume usual resident activities as well as the usual scheduled visits for all units.

To schedule nursing home visits, call Jeannie Crowder at 603-283-9409, or call Christine Gowen at 399-7348 to schedule visits in assisted living.

We are working directly with CVS for resident boosters, and have set the date of Wednesday Nov 3, 2021 for a booster shot for any qualifying resident who wishes to receive it. I know the social workers have been in touch with many of you already to discuss your preference, and will follow up with any necessary documents/consents.

We have now instituted a new 'minimum' starting wage at Maplewood of \$15.00/hour for entry level positions. We request your help in getting the word out. We are looking for staff in many positions including housekeeping, dietary, reception and all nursing department positions. Sign on bonuses are available for most positions (ie \$2,000 bonus for dietary staff at this time). All new employees must be vaccinated or have begun this process (CMS has yet to issue its final rule/mandate).

This past week, we became aware of a nationwide cyberattack on a major telephone service reseller; it impacted some of our incoming calls at the beginning of the week at the Maplewood and Keene buildings. Some staff reported having voicemail with only static, but no wording. We want to apologize if any of you were impacted when trying to call either Maplewood or our Finance office. Please call again if you left a voicemail but have not received a call back yet.

We are planning our second of 2 annual disaster drills. This drill will test our staff's immediate response to one of our policies. If any visitors are in the building at the time, you may hear a paged announcement about the event and we will clearly state that it's a drill. You may be instructed by the overhead page and/or staff to do something specific. Play along and help us practice our policy if you happen to be present.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



9/23/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

ALL residents and ALL staff are negative from this weeks' round of testing. We continue to be required 2 consecutive weeks with no other positive tests found.

2nd floor visits will be limited to compassionate visits only, while 3rd, 4th and TLC floors can resume normal visits scheduled through Jeannie Crowder. We test again next week and must have two consecutive weeks of all negative results to return to fully return to scheduled visits for all units.

The FDA has now authorized the coronavirus booster shot for people 65 and older and adults at risk of severe illness. It further goes on to include those "whose frequent institutional or occupational exposure" puts them at high risk of serious complications from the disease. Specifically this authorization pertains to those who received the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine (which is the vast majority of our residents) and should be 6 months after its 2-shot regime. We will be working with our pharmacy provider to determine our best option for the booster delivery to those residents who will choose this. Our social services team will work to reach out to each resident/responsible party for any necessary paperwork. Our nurse managers and medical director are always your best contacts for clinical questions you may have as you consider if a booster is a good choice for you.

Please call Jeannie Crowder at 603-283-9409 to schedule a visit in the nursing home, or call Christine Gowen at 399-7348 to schedule visits in assisted living.

As always, please take care, keep washing your hands after touching high touch surfaces, keep good spacing between yourselves and those you don't live with and please wear a mask around others who are not from your household.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



9/17/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We just learned of a 2nd direct care staff member who tested positive. All visitations remain the same as reported in the previous letter sent earlier today. 2nd floor visits will be limited to compassionate visits only, while 3rd, 4th and TLC floors can resume normal visits scheduled through Jeannie Crowder. We test again next week and must have two consecutive weeks of all negative results to return to fully return to scheduled visits for all units.

Please call Jeannie Crowder at 603-283-9409 to schedule a visit in the nursing home, or call Christine Gowen at 399-7348 to schedule visits in assisted living.

As always, please take care, keep washing your hands after touching high touch surfaces, keep good spacing between yourselves and those you don't live with and please wear a mask around others who are not from your household.

Kathryn Kindopp
Administrator



9/17/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

ALL residents were negative from last weeks' round of testing. **One staff member tested positive.** 2nd floor visits will be limited to compassionate visits only, while 3rd, 4th and TLC floors can resume normal visits scheduled through Jeannie Crowder. We test again next week and must have two consecutive weeks of all negative results to return to fully return to scheduled visits for all units.

There are new federal rules that have just been released regarding testing after finding a positive case. We are studying the new rules and will continue to work with public health and the Department of Health and Human Services to ensure we follow all the correct rules and regulations.

Please call Jeannie Crowder at 603-283-9409 to schedule a visit in the nursing home, or call Christine Gowen at 399-7348 to schedule visits in assisted living.

As always, please take care, keep washing your hands after touching high touch surfaces, keep good spacing between yourselves and those you don't live with and please wear a mask around others who are not from your household.

Kathryn Kindopp
Administrator



9/8/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have learned of a new positive staff member. This person last worked 8/26, and became symptomatic 9/1 with a positive test result returned 9/7. In an abundance of caution, Public Health has recommended we proceed with response testing for 2 weeks, and halt regular visits at this time.

We can offer compassionate care visits until public health clears us; call Jeannie Crowder at 603-283-9409 to schedule a visit in the nursing home, or call Christine Gowen at 399-7348 to schedule visits in assisted living.

Following various recommendations including CDC, our Medical Director (Dr. Keene) has been evaluating current residents to determine if they meet criteria for being considered 'immunocompromised' by the CDC definition. We are seeing if we can initiate a 3rd dose of vaccination to those who qualify. Concurrently, we are also continuing to monitor for FDA approval of a booster vaccination for all residents. Our social services team will be reaching out to you/your responsible party to start a discussion about additional vaccinations.

There is no update from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (our main payer source) regarding the requirement of vaccination for our staff as I pen this. We continue to advocate for vaccination, yet want to support our staff who believe they may qualify for an exemption. This has been a difficult time for some of our staff who may need to choose between continuing their role here versus seeking alternative employment depending on how the rule is written. To date, other employers have had to offer such things as a medical exemption (includes if someone had a severe reaction to the first dose or an allergy to some of the ingredients of the vaccines). We have staff members that legitimately fall into these categories, and it will be very sad indeed if CMS does not allow such an exemption.

We will keep you updated with testing outcomes and when routine visitation may restart.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



9/2/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

ALL residents and ALL staff are negative from this weeks' round of testing. Public Health has taken us out of 'outbreak' status.

Due to the high rate of transmission in our county, we will continue with scheduling visits for now. Please call Jeannie Crowder at 603-283-9409 to schedule a visit in the nursing home, or call Christine Gowen at 399-7348 to schedule visits in assisted living.

I know many of our families are routine visitors, however, it's really important that anyone having visited knows what to do if you discover any COVID related signs or symptoms. Please alert us, get tested and then share your results with us; this information is an important part of our mitigation strategy that helps to protect your loved one, other residents and staff. We really want you to take the educational hand-out to ensure you keep the instructions handy. Just as we alert you with any of our known positive cases, we appreciate those of you who have reached out to us to alert us if your visit may have resulted in a possible exposure to the resident you visited. We always work with Public Health and follow their guidance which may include isolating the resident, using droplet precautions and testing the resident within a prescribed time frame.

We frequently remind our staff to *act* as though they have the virus and to wear PPE (personal protective equipment) perfectly to reduce the chance of spreading the virus. I would request the same of visitors; please wear you mask correctly over your mouth and nose throughout the visit, keep a distance (6 feet) from all others in the home, and avoid touching many surfaces. After you touch 'high touch surfaces' (i.e. elevator buttons), reach for a pump of Purell to disinfect your hands. You should always disinfect your hands as you enter the building, after touching high touch surfaces, and always wash your hands with soap and water after toileting. You should reach for a pump of Purell as you exit a residents' room, and then as you exit the building after removing your mask.

We continue to advocate for everyone to choose vaccinations, to wear masks around anyone outside your household, and please consider going for testing before you visit to know your own status and help us reduce the potential for bringing this virus into our building.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



8/26/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

ALL residents and ALL staff are negative from this weeks' round of testing. We continue to be required 100% testing until we have 2 consecutive weeks with no other positive tests found.

The public health department has advised us that we can do in-person visits with residents on 3rd floor, 4th floor and the TLC unit. Please call Jeannie Crowder at 603-283-9409 to schedule a visit. Compassionate care visits (with extensive PPE) are available for 2nd floor; scheduling these through Jeannie is also required. ALF families should call Christine Gowen at 399-7348 to schedule visits.

The Delta variant is now the most prevalent throughout our country. It is more contagious, and with it being 6 months since our residents were vaccinated, their immunity may be waning. It is imperative that visitors wear masks at all times to help us prevent virus exposure to our residents and staff. We are in contact with our pharmacy provider regarding the booster shots; there is nothing definitive other than based on our winter clinics, we may see our ability to offer the booster at the beginning of October.

The federal entity (CMS) that announced the vaccine requirement last week for all staff in nursing homes has not yet published its final rule. The American Health Care Association (AHCA) has shared the following:

"Following an announcement from President Biden last week that all nursing home staff will be required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 in a forthcoming regulation, the nursing home industry warned about the potential impact on the profession's already challenging workforce situation. Industry leaders are deeply concerned that it may cause a mass exodus from the nursing home profession, leaving frail seniors without the caregivers and access to care they need.

The Delta variant is now the most common variant in the US, making up over 85% of cases, and is two to three times as contagious as prior variants. This is causing a surge in cases in communities across the US, which puts long term care facilities at risk of outbreaks. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) urges healthcare workers to stay vigilant to prevent the spread of the virus and protect staff and residents in long term care facilities.

The CDC recommends staff and visitors take the following steps:

- Get vaccinated as soon as possible
- Wear a mask even if you are vaccinated
- Stay home if you feel ill
- Get tested if you have COVID-19 symptoms

To maintain compliance with CMS memo on visitation, while ensuring the safety of residents and staff, AHCA recommends that nursing homes enact policies that "strongly encourage" all visitors to:

- Be vaccinated;

- Always wear a mask during the visit; and
- Have a negative COVID-19 test if the community spread of COVID-19 is moderate to high OR obtain a negative Point of Care test the day of or day before visitation."

We have begun working with our staff and contractors to ensure they are aware of this emerging vaccine requirement and asking about their intent to vaccinate. Throughout the country, all nursing homes are impacted and many homes are concerned about staff who may decide to leave before agreeing to this vaccination. We have fully supported all staff/contractors to get the vaccination; we have educated them, held clinics, and used incentives. 75% of Maplewood staff have been fully vaccinated, but a sudden loss of dozens of staff will be quite concerning. We have to consider seriously any ability to admit new residents until we know the full federal rules and the potential impact on our staffing. We may need to close a nursing home floor and redistribute residents to only 2 of our floors to ensure staffing coverage. This would not be our first choice, but the safety and care of all residents is our top priority.

I'm including an article from ABC news that is a good overview of what the nursing home industry is currently facing. As published in the Keene Sentinel, starting in mid-September, the minimum entry-level starting wage will be \$15.00/hour at Maplewood. Please help promote Maplewood to anyone you know seeking employment; we have openings in nearly all departments. Our HR Director, Kim May, can be contacted at 603-399-7378.

We continue to appreciate your support and understanding during these very difficult times. We believe it's a safe choice to wear masks around anyone outside your household. We encourage all visitors to choose vaccinations, and please consider going for testing before you visit to know your own status.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kathryn Kindopp", followed by the letters "NHA" in a slightly different script.

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator

Pandemic, labor shortages have left long-term care facilities competing for staff

Some facilities may also see resignations over the new federal vaccine mandate.

By Laura Romero, ABC news

August 19, 2021, 5:00 AM

• 7 min read

Labor shortages across the country are fueling a competition among long-term care facilities to retain and hire staff as they grapple with the delta variant.

With U.S. job openings hitting a record high of 9.2 million, nursing homes and other long-term care facilities are losing staff to other industries, or to other nursing facilities that can offer higher wages and better benefits, long-term care advocates and health care associations tell ABC News.

Staff shortages among nursing homes are not new. But advocates say the combination of the coronavirus pandemic, a general labor shortage, and a looming vaccine mandate for many long-term care facilities is making it even more difficult to keep staff.

Many facilities are raising their pay as a result -- which in turn has increased competition.

"You have places offering a starting rate of \$19 or \$20 with huge sign-up bonuses of thousands of dollars," said Paul Liistro, CEO of Manchester Manor and Vernon Manor nursing homes in Connecticut. In contrast, Liistro said, his facilities are on a three-year track to provide certified nursing assistants a \$20 hourly wage.

In May 2020, the median annual wage for long-term care nursing assistants -- most of whom work full-time -- was \$30,120, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Liistro told ABC News that for a brief period of time at the start of the pandemic, some nursing homes were able to raise staff salaries after receiving federal and state coronavirus relief funds. But Liistro said with that aid no longer available, his facilities can't keep up with the competitive wages being offered in other places.

And Liistro said he expects to see some resignations due to the upcoming mandate that will require his staffers to either get vaccinated or be tested regularly.

On Wednesday, the Biden administration announced that it will require nursing home staffs be vaccinated against COVID-19 as a condition for those facilities to continue receiving federal Medicare and Medicaid funding. The latest move by the White House is already receiving pushback from advocates who say the decision will only lead to more staff shortages.

"Focusing only on nursing homes will cause vaccine-hesitant workers to flee to other health care providers and leave many centers without adequate staff to care for residents," said Mark Parkinson, president and CEO of the American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living, which represents more than 14,000 nursing homes. "It will make an already difficult workforce shortage even worse. The net effect of this action will be the opposite of its intent, and it will affect the ability to provide quality care to our residents."

Nationwide vaccination rates among nursing home staff members are lagging far behind residents. According to the American Association of Retired Persons, 78% of long-term care facility residents are fully vaccinated -- while staff vaccinations are only at 56.7%

Liistro told ABC News that his staff continues to express concerns about the safety and efficacy of the vaccine, despite nursing home cases and deaths plummeting after they were prioritized for the vaccine.

"We have about 125 unvaccinated people," Liistro said of his staff. "My guess is that 80% are going to get vaccinated, 10% will get exemptions and the other 10% will leave."

"But," he said, "I'm confident we will find people who want to work in a safe environment with employers who are doing the right thing."

At John Knox Village, an independent 430-bed nursing facility located in a Kansas City suburb, managers say they're seeing competition from beyond the health care industry. On top of losing nurses and certified nursing assistants to other nursing homes and hospitals offering higher salaries, the facility recently lost its long-time housekeeper to a warehouse job that offered an additional \$3 an hour.

John Knox Village spokesperson Emily Banyas said that last year, the facility raised wages to between \$11-\$12 an hour for certified nursing assistants in order to remain competitive with stores like Target and Walmart. But recently the big-box stores raised their wages yet again, and are offering added benefits like college tuition and moving expenses.

"It's turning into a borderline crisis for senior living communities," Banyas said.

Most of the 310 Florida nursing homes and 23 assisted living facilities questioned last month by the Florida Health Care Association reported they are facing staff challenges.

As a result, said FHCA spokesperson Kristen Knapp, many Florida facilities are having to pay temporary staffing agencies to fill positions. That, in turn, has cost facilities in the state an additional \$22.7 million, according to the Agency for Health Care Administration.

Knapp also said that some facilities have been unable to take on new patients because they lack the necessary staff.

In Pennsylvania, the long-term care workforce crisis has "spiraled out of control," said Zach Shamberg, president and CEO of the Pennsylvania Health Care Association.

Like in Florida, Pennsylvania providers have relied heavily on agency staff or contractors to fill staffing needs, Shamberg said -- but now, even those agencies are facing their own workforce shortage.

"Other sectors, including hospitals, have the financial means to offer extravagant bonuses and rapidly maximize wages," Shamberg said. "Long-term care providers simply cannot keep pace, which leads to workers leaving for other jobs in health care and other industries."

Dr. David Gifford, chief medical officer for the AHCA/NCAL, said a long-term solution is desperately needed.

"Nursing homes are in constant competition for staff," said Gifford. "Many providers struggle to recruit and retain caregivers who can often find less demanding jobs in other settings, such as hospitals and industries that can offer better pay."

"This has been persistent, and the most pressing challenge confronting long-term care, which the COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated," Gifford said. "The ultimate impact is on our nation's seniors, who may face limited access to long-term care."



8/19/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We began receiving the results of testing yesterday and have 2 results remaining as I write this letter informing you that we have received confirmation of a new resident at Maplewood positive for COVID-19. Resident safety is our top priority. We are doing everything we can to ensure we stop the spread of COVID-19 within our facility including staying in very close communication with public health and the department of health and human services to ensure we follow their guidance and take all the appropriate steps. Residents in affected areas have stayed in their rooms and staff has been using full PPE for all care since we learned of the case reported last week.

We continue with our covid wing in a distant section of the 3rd floor where it is completely separated from all other staff and residents. Staff assigned is dedicated to the COVID wing.

You are always welcome to talk with the nurse manager or your social worker for updates on the status of your loved one. As you know we remain closed to visitors except for compassionate care visits. Connecting with family members is incredibly important to our residents. We do have skype, Face Time and messenger set up on a device on each unit for residents and families to connect. You can talk to your social worker about how to do this.

We will contact you specifically and directly if you/your loved one is suspected or diagnosed with COVID-19. We will continue to provide you (as the primary responsible party about you/your loved one at Maplewood) with weekly updates or more frequently if we learn of any new positive staff and/or resident cases. You can help us most by sharing what you know with your extended family.

We note 2 major announcements this week; booster shots being recommended for our population and a vaccination mandate for long term care staff throughout the country. We will learn all that we can about these and be as prepared as we can to manage both scenarios.

We continue to appreciate your support and understanding during these very difficult times. There is widespread transmission in Cheshire County, and we encourage you to mask up when in closed/confined spaces regardless of vaccination status.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



8/12/21

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We are informing you that we have received confirmation that a resident at Maplewood has tested positive for COVID-19. As I've reported prior, all residents have been fully vaccinated; breakthrough cases can and do occur. We are working closely with DHHS and public health who will advise us on the necessary steps and any changes needed along the way. In addition to testing all staff and residents, they are advising us to keep residents in their rooms as much as possible on 2nd and 3rd floor. We stood up our COVID wing in a distant section of the 3rd floor where it is completely separate (including a zip wall) from all other staff and residents. Staff assigned will be dedicated to the COVID wing.

Our personal protective equipment (PPE) levels are very strong at this point. We continue all infection prevention efforts including isolating any resident with any related sign or symptom and we also test them. We have rapid tests we can perform at Maplewood that show results in 15 minutes, however these are not always accurate and can have false negatives. It is for this reason, that our medical staff will also order the more accurate PCR test. This test can take 2 or more days to get results returned from public health. During the time we wait for results, the resident remains in their room and we enter using all necessary PPE.

We will have to continue to halt our open visitation; public health will inform us when we will be able to resume. Residents whom public health advises us to isolate to their units will not be able to come down for window visits. Compassionate care visits are allowed, and you would call to schedule them. We can also offer Face Time and similar types of visits.

We will always communicate with you as the primary responsible party about your loved one here at Maplewood. You can help us most by sharing what you know with your extended family. We continue to appreciate your support and understanding during these very difficult times. There is widespread transmission in Cheshire County, and we encourage you to mask up when in closed/confined spaces regardless of vaccination status.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



8/11/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have just learned of a new positive case in a direct care worker at Maplewood. The last day worked was Friday; they appropriately called out sick early this week due to symptoms and went for testing. Today, the results came back as positive for COVID-19.

We have alerted DHHS and Public Health who have instructed us to halt visitation immediately (except for compassionate care visits which would need to be scheduled). We will complete testing of all staff and residents regardless of vaccination as per usual for at least the next 2 weeks. We will update you with any new findings or information about resumption of visitation.

To schedule nursing home visits please call Jeannie Crowder @ 603-283-9409 or Christine Gowen for Assisted Living visits @ 603-399-7348.

We follow all recommendations from the state and Public Health including isolating and testing any resident with any symptoms associated with COVID-19. We continue to screen all staff as they enter, and any staff with any related symptoms is kept out of the facility and sent for testing.

For anyone who had visited this week, you will have noticed that we reinstituted eye protection due to the widespread community transmission that is happening in Cheshire County. Given the data, it is good practice to resume mask wearing in closed spaces regardless of vaccination status. Continue to practice good hand hygiene and keep a 6 foot distance from others to be extra careful. We always recommend outdoor seating at restaurants as the best choice whenever possible.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator

7/30/2021



Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

ALL residents and ALL staff are negative for 2 consecutive weeks! This means we return to the testing frequency based on community positivity rates. We still must screen all residents and staff daily for any symptoms associated with COVID-19 and proceed accordingly. Over the past 2 weeks, 5 of the 10 county homes have been conducting response testing for similar situations as what we had. It was nearly 4 months between positive tests; based on statistics from other nursing homes, I think we may see upticks in cases and likely future response testing weeks. We will always inform you of any positive cases, and our response.

Visitation remains between the hours of **9:30-11:00 am** as well as **1:00-4:00 pm**. We are still unable to support visitor attendance at activity programs or at resident meals.

Our open Wi-Fi was not performing correctly recently; we found a ROKU device added to a resident's TV was the culprit. This device was interfering with the signal strength of our open Wi-Fi and impacted all 3 floors in a certain portion of the nursing home. I've added the following to our resident handbook:

Wi-Fi DEVICES (ie. Roku, Fire Stick and other media streaming devices)

Please work with your RN manager and/or social worker if you want to use a Wi-Fi impacting (but HIPAA compliant) device such as the Roku or Fire Stick that attaches to televisions. Some models of these devices interfere with our Wi-Fi and impact not only our open Wi-Fi system, but can also impact the operations of our secure system that we use for our medical records and other tasks requiring high levels of security. Our team will have the IT department check these devices out to ensure there is no interference. As a reminder, we generally discourage these because they require an additional remote.

We would like to introduce a new Activity Director to you: Michelle Robinson begins her work with us on August 2nd. She has previously worked at other local health care centers including as the Activity Director at Applewood in Winchester.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator

7/27/2021



Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

This was a confusing and frustrating weekend for Maplewood. Within a few hours of notifying you that we believed there was another positive test result in a staff person, it was learned that there was an error in the test report given to this particular staff person. Their doctor called them to correct the test result as "NEGATIVE".

The confusion this degree of error causes is immeasurable. There are over 500 individuals we communicate with each time there is a finding which takes time. Undoing it also takes time. I chose not to immediately update any correspondence to residents/families because we have been awaiting 8 test results from the Public Health Lab – from last week (their lab no longer works on weekends). Until we had all results returned and no other changes in plans from Public Health, I waited to get updated and correct information out to you.

Now that we have ALL tests back, we are thankful to report **that ALL residents and ALL staff are negative** from this first round of testing. We continue to be required to test until we have 2 consecutive weeks with no other positive tests found.

The good news is that we can **now resume visitation**. We do have a few observations we want to share and ask that you help us with the following:

- Please remember that we communicate with you; the resident and/or primary decision maker in the family. We request your help to share updates with the rest of your family/interested parties. We also post copies of family letters on the Cheshire County Website. We note some families are large and not everyone knew of our temporary closure to indoor visits last week.
- Please go directly to the resident's room where you can visit. You're also welcome to take the resident directly outside (either the patio off of first floor, or the front parking lot) and then go directly to the resident's room upon return.
- Please call the nurse manager if you would like a meeting; please avoid being near the nursing stations for lengthy conversations – we will work with you, including coming to the resident room to answer your questions.
- Please keep 6 feet from all other residents and staff.

Visitation remains between the hours of **9:30-11:00 am** as well as **1:00-4:00 pm**. We are still unable to support visitor attendance at activity programs or at resident meals.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



7/20/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have just learned of a positive test in a part time non-clinical worker who works on resident floors. This worker was last in our building this past Thursday. Regardless of vaccination status of anyone testing positive, we must proceed with 100% testing of all staff and residents; testing occurs regardless of vaccine status of staff and residents as well. We have alerted Public Health and the Department of Health and Human Services and will commence 100% resident and staff testing as directed by them.

During this first period of testing time, we have to cancel all indoor visitations. We can offer window visits and compassionate care visits that we will need you to book. We will conduct weekly testing of all staff and residents (regardless of vaccination) for at least the next 2 weeks. As always, we will update you with any new findings or new information about resumption of visits.

To schedule nursing home visits please call Jeannie Crowder @ 603-283-9409. Assisted Living resident visits are scheduled through Christine Gowen @ 603-399-7348.

Our PPE (personal protective equipment) stock remains good at this time.

As a reminder, we continue to follow all recommendations from the state and Public Health including isolating and testing any resident with any symptoms associated with COVID-19. We continue to screen every single staff member as they enter, and send for testing anyone who has any symptoms associated with COVID-19 and/or possible exposure.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



7/8/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 cases to report in either resident or staff since our last correspondence.

We have reopened part of our back patio; starting Monday July 12th, we will encourage visitors to take their loved ones out back to enjoy this area. We apologize that the gardens have not been tended to, and a portion of the patio is still cordoned off for ongoing construction staging work. By the sliding door, there is a table with masks and disinfectant always available. We encourage you to take some wipes with you in case the seat you choose has some pollen or dust to clear off. We will have temporary paper signs guiding visitors from the elevators on 1st floor to the patio and back again. Please continue to keep your masks on in the hallways and keep 6 feet of space between staff, construction workers and other residents. We appreciate you for remembering to limit visitors to 2 per resident unless you've scheduled ahead of time with us.

Please continue to arrive to the main front entrance during the following times: **9:30-11:00 am** as well as **1:00-4:00 pm**. We will soon be installing a walk-up screen that will tell you your temperature in the vestibule so you can complete all of the visitor sign-in documents without the receptionist having to take your temperature. You will simply walk forwards until your face fits the outline of the face in the monitor. It will talk to you and advise you if you are too near or far, plus give you your temperature reading.

We note that some families are taking their loved ones off campus and we continue to encourage good hand hygiene and mask wearing inside buildings. The safest way to enjoy restaurant food is outdoors whenever possible; poorly ventilated indoor areas can be a risk for many viruses that cause illness. The covid-19 cases in Cheshire County remain low, however, we need to stay vigilant because the 'Delta variant' is more contagious and is predicted to be the dominant strain in the coming months. The vaccination is designed to prevent serious illness requiring hospitalization or death; however, breakthrough cases can happen. It is for this reason that maintaining strong infection prevention measures for our vulnerable population is a good choice for the ongoing safety of our residents, staff and all who visit our home.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



6/25/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 cases to report in either resident or staff since our last correspondence.

It seems our open visitation has been going well, however we are noting some of our residents often nap or have care needs after lunch. We want to better serve you as visitors while acknowledging time sensitive needs of our residents.

Beginning Monday June 28th, we are additionally having **open visitation from 9:30-11:00 am** as well as **1:00-4:00 pm** all the days of the week. Visitors for the nursing home should come through our main entrance; cleanse your hands and put on a surgical mask (blue to the outside), then complete the screening paperwork and advance to the door to get your temperature taken.

Reminder that we can't yet support you attending a resident activity; you may see performers in our front area Thursday mornings, while it's lovely for the residents; we apologize that we can't yet support your attendance in and amongst other residents.

Assisted living visitors can enter through the ALF door. We know it directs folks to our main entrance, but that's really for someone new coming here such as interviewees. ALF visitors have our full permission to ignore that particular sign.

Continue to limit to 2 visitors per resident during these time frames, and go directly to the resident's room. You can either visit inside the room, or take the resident directly outdoors through the front door. Possibly by next week, our back patio will once again be open – as soon as it is, we will post within the facility and help direct you out there. Due to the patio having been off limits to us during construction, we've only kept up with the lawn, so please excuse the lack of attention to the flowers/gardens.

Thank-you for keeping your masks on inside the building and maintaining the 6 foot spacing from all other residents and staff.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



6/18/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 cases to report in either resident or staff since our last correspondence.

We are going to begin a more open visitation **starting Monday June 21st between the hours of 1pm and 4pm all days of the week**; unscheduled visitors may come through the main doorway at our reception. All visitors must complete a questionnaire including having temperatures taken. Please limit to 2 visitors per resident during these time frames. You must wear a surgical mask (blue side out) and go directly to the resident's room and can either visit inside the room, or take the resident directly outdoors through the front door. In approximately 2 weeks, our back patio may be ready and available for visits. I will update you once that is an option. Touring through the hallways, using the balconies and eating during the visit are **still not yet permitted**. We appreciate your attention to this update. Our staff will help remind and guide visitors when needed. Please remain 6 feet away from staff and other residents.

Please use the alcohol based hand sanitizer as you enter the building, as you enter and then exit the resident room, and after any time you've touched high touch surfaces such as the elevator buttons. Visitors must be able to wear a mask to come inside – options include outdoor visits with infants who can't wear a mask, or window visits are always a safe choice. Visitation during an activity program is not currently allowable.

We still have some renovation underway on 1st floor, and throughout the building there are minor fixes being completed by the DEW construction team. We have opened up 2 of our main nursing stations this week, and plan to move the 2nd floor nursing station next week. The overall project is at the point of "final punch list" and some warrantee items have been noted needing correction on the resident units.

Clothing reminder; we are seeing an uptick in unmarked clothing. In order to prevent lost clothing items, you must leave the bag of clothes with the residents name on it with the receptionist so we can properly label all items with iron-on or special markers that don't bleed and stain during our industrial washing.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



6/3/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 cases to report in either resident or staff since our last correspondence.

Since April of last year, I have been sending weekly (or more) correspondence to you. Recently, there have been fewer rule changes directly impacting long term care. Many of the newsworthy updates don't impact long term care as we still must follow CMS (Centers for Medicaid and Medicare services) rules and regulations. I will correspond with any major changes or if there are any positive cases to report, however I may not send out weekly letters from now on.

We are beginning to field questions about tours; unfortunately, CMS does not yet support this activity. As mentioned in past letters, visitors must go directly to the resident's room or to the location where they will be visiting. At this time, our back patio is still being used for construction access to our renovations on the first floor. We hope within a few weeks that we will be able to open it for use by staff as well as residents and visitors. At that point in time, we would transition some of our outdoor visits to the back patio location.

Visitation continues to be **through appointment only** and during the hours of our receptionist coverage (except compassionate care visits). To book please call:

Nursing home resident visits are scheduled through Jeannie Crowder @ 603-283-9409. Assisted Living resident visits are scheduled through Christine Gowen @ 603-399-7348.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



5/26/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 cases to report in either resident or staff since our last correspondence.

Building update: we've had our final furniture delivery including some outdoor furniture as you walk up. Spacing arrangement is to separate parties 6 feet from one another. We've passed the final Fire Marshal inspection and had our certificate of occupancy inspection yesterday. Once we get final documents, the remaining focus will be on many lists of corrective items throughout the occupied building. Workers undergo the same testing and active screening as we do; some are vaccinated and all must wear the same PPE as is required by staff while inside the occupied building.

Centers for Medicaid and Medicare services (CMS) mandates many requirements including wearing surgical masks and currently still wearing goggles if we are within 6 feet of residents indoors. CMS requires that we follow core principles of infection prevention which must be "adhered to at all times". Also part of their written rules reads as follows; "visitors who are unable to adhere to the core principles....should not be permitted to visit or should be asked to leave." There are many reasons for needing to schedule visits including needing consent from a roommate for a visit in a shared room, and CMS expects facilities to set the number of visitors and length of visits we can handle. You will not be permitted inside the building if you simply show up at this point. CMS continues to require active screening, and if the visit is in the resident room, CMS specifically notes that "visitors should not walk around different halls of the facility....they should go directly to the residents' room or designated visitation area." We've slowly been increasing our visitation numbers based on an approximate 1 hour visit. Please continue to honor this time frame. We are all eager to move towards the least restrictions, but we're doing it systematically. CMS levies penalties and fines on us for rule non-compliance.

Visitation continues to be **through appointment only** and during the hours of our receptionist coverage (except compassionate care visits). To book please call:

Nursing home resident visits are scheduled through Jeannie Crowder @ 603-283-9409. Assisted Living resident visits are scheduled through Christine Gowen @ 603-399-7348.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



5/12/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 cases to report in either resident or staff since our last correspondence.

As promised, I am attaching our updated Visitor Expectations document. We will continue to book visitation. We are working to streamline some processes including having visitors come into the vestibule to get screened and cleanse hands. You won't need to call upon arrival during receptionist hours.

We are scheduling more visits per day, so you may find you need to wait outside of the vestibule if someone is ahead of you. The other request I have is if you see an ambulance pulled up, we will want to focus on the resident either coming or going. Please be patient and let us prioritize getting the resident either in or out and keep the 6 foot spacing away from any staff or other residents during your visit.

Visitation continues to be through appointment; to book please call:

Nursing home resident visits are scheduled through Jeannie Crowder @ 603-283-9409. Assisted Living resident visits are scheduled through Christine Gowen @ 603-399-7348.

Our newest rules still require that we actively screen and take everyone's temperature before visiting. Masks are still required at this time. Recommendations continue to indicate that outdoor visits are safest, followed by indoor visits in a designated area. Not all residents are easily able to come off of the unit, so we do have some visits in the resident rooms. The least desirable visit inside is when residents have room mates. We will get permission from the roommate before a visit will happen in a shared room. At any point if we learn of a positive staff or resident, we will have to follow public health directives which most likely will include a temporary halt on all visitations – except for compassionate care or end of life visits which are always permitted with PPE.

These rules also direct us to ask visitors if they will share their vaccination status – this impacts a few areas including contact tracing and exposure risks as well as future relaxations of masking requirements. You don't need to tell us your status if you don't want to. We may ask if you will allow us to perform a rapid COVID-19 test; again, this is not a condition for visitation, only additional precautions to mitigate this disease.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



5/6/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 cases to report in either resident or staff since our last correspondence.

There was a call Wednesday between officials from the Department of Health and Human Services as well as Public Health and surveyors to discuss the latest rules that came out last week from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). These updated rules pertain to visitation as well as resident dining and activity programming. The state is no longer going to issue their own interpretive guidance, and long term care facilities will follow directives from CMS and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

We interpret that we are now able to allow residents to attend activities and meals without face coverings or distancing so long as all residents present are fully vaccinated. Whenever a resident participates who is not yet fully vaccinated, masks are to be worn by all (except during the actual eating of a meal) and any resident not yet fully vaccinated will need to have the 6 foot distancing maintained. As mentioned in previous letters, we did achieve 100% resident vaccinations, though some newer admissions may be in varying phases of their vaccination completion. We are working on a system to maintain necessary compliance on each unit.

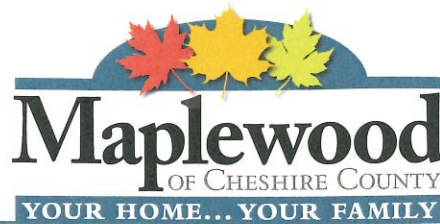
Our team has been meeting to integrate the information above as well as understanding how we can make some modifications to our visitation. We must adhere to the new CMS rules while maintaining the CDC principles of infection prevention in long term care settings. We have begun to reshape our program this week, and will continue to modify our protocols in keeping with rule updates. My goal is to send you updated Visitor Expectations that are aligned with the initial relaxing of CMS rules with next week's letter.

Visitation continues to be through appointment; to book please call:

Nursing home resident visits are scheduled through Jeannie Crowder @ 603-283-9409. Assisted Living resident visits are scheduled through Christine Gowen @ 603-399-7348.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



4/30/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 cases to report in either resident or staff since our last correspondence.

I am writing this additional letter to families due to something mentioned at the Governor's Thursday press conference on 4/29/21. The Commissioner of Health and Human services was discussing visitation in nursing homes. She indicated that the state is not going to have any guidance for nursing home visitation outside of CDC (Centers for Disease Control) guidance. This is a new position for the state to take as we have juggled between public health, health and human services in addition to Federal rules and regulations from CMS (Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services). Updated CDC and CMS rules were released just this week that our team is reviewing.

I am excited to see that there will be some easing of restrictions that should help improve the lives of our residents. That said, these new documents continue to require active screening of all individuals, ongoing use of PPE (personal protective equipment such as masks and goggles), frequent hand hygiene performance and other expectations that we need to maintain.

Once we have met with the state and our own Maplewood team next week, we will come up with our plan. Our goal will always be to remain as safe as possible for our residents and staff, including anyone that enters our home. We will write up new policies and procedures, we will retrain all staff impacted by changes and then we will implement new processes. We appreciate your patience and understanding while we take a moment to understand and plan before we implement any changes.

Visitation continues to be through appointment; to book please call:

Nursing home resident visits are scheduled through Jeannie Crowder @ 603-283-9409. Assisted Living resident visits are scheduled through Christine Gowen @ 603-399-7348.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



4/27/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 cases to report in either resident or staff since our last correspondence.

We continue scheduling limited indoor visits, outdoor visits as well as the compassionate care visits. To book visits please call:

Nursing home resident visits are scheduled through Jeannie Crowder @ 603-283-9409. Assisted Living resident visits are scheduled through Christine Gowen @ 603-399-7348.

We know your limited indoor visits are becoming more of a routine; however we still ask if you can wait for us to bring you inside through the ALF entrance. We've noticed some folks are walking right in, but we may not be ready for you. If the weather is inclement, you can wait in between the sliding doors, but we're trying to keep the ALF lobby area unoccupied in case ALF residents are present.

Elevator work: Stanley Elevator Company is finishing up the work in our original elevator area. Once they are done, our construction team has a couple of items to work on in this same area. We expect all will be fully completed by the middle of next week. After that, we will need to get the elevator inspected for full return to service.

Renovation: We have 2 remaining elevator lobby areas to complete. This week 2nd floor is being renovated. When that floor is done in 2 weeks; we will be left with the final elevator lobby area up on 4th floor to complete. The overall project is nearing the mark where we are scheduling final state inspections – late May is our target. This could mean that as early as June, we may have the resident floors completed and fully turned over to us. All that remains includes some post-construction issues that we've postponed due to limiting construction access to occupied spaces. At this point, we have several members of the DEW construction team that are fully vaccinated and are testing at the same interval as our staff. Using the same precautions that all of our staff do, they are beginning to tackle remaining projects within occupied spaces and at times on resident units.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



4/21/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 cases to report in either resident or staff since our last correspondence. We completed the second week of 100% staff and resident testing and all were negative. The change in mask mandate at the state level has no impact on our operations; we must follow the CMS, CDC and Public Health requirements. Anyone entering Maplewood must wear at a minimum the surgical style mask. Our regulatory bodies also require visitors to wear a mask for outdoor visits. We can provide you a mask at any time you may need one.

We continue scheduling limited indoor visits, outdoor visits as well as the compassionate care visits. To book visits please call:

Nursing home resident visits are scheduled through Jeannie Crowder @ 603-283-9409. Assisted Living resident visits are scheduled through Christine Gowen @ 603-399-7348.

We continue to focus our efforts at returning your calls in the afternoons to schedule visits. This is helping us to balance our usual work in addition to working with you on scheduling. Please arrive on time; we have many visits each day and we want to ensure everyone gets their visit in as scheduled.

Mother's week is coming up; yes, a whole week! In all honesty, we recognize that one single day will not permit us to honor all of your hopes to visit or Face Time your mothers here, so we want to honor all Mother's day requests for visits and Face Times between Wed May 5th, through Wed May 12th. Thank-you for your understanding!

Elevator work: Stanley Elevator Company continues with the replacement of the mechanical parts of one of our original elevators, they are about half way through this project. It's not going to look very exciting, as the interior is remaining unchanged. We will certainly welcome the return of all 3 elevators that go from ground to 4th once this project is completed. That said, we are also at another junction in our renovations; the lobby areas in front of each original elevator on each floor is also being completed. At this point, the ground floor level and 3rd floor levels are completed. Soon 1st will be, then construction moves to the 2nd floor, and finally, the 4th floor.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



4/14/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 cases to report in either resident or staff since our last correspondence. We completed the second week of 100% staff and resident testing at the beginning of this week; we expect to receive full results by the end of the week.

We are allowed once again to offer limited indoor visits, outdoor visits as well as the compassionate care visits. To book visits please call:

Nursing home resident visits are scheduled through Jeannie Crowder @ 603-283-9409. Assisted Living resident visits are scheduled through Christine Gowen @ 603-399-7348.

Due to the high volume of calls requesting visits and needing to balance the usual day to day social work requirements always present; we are going to focus our afternoons on returning calls and scheduling visits. Please leave your single message relating to a visit request with Jeannie, as this will help us to continue great customer service for all.

Elevator work: this week the Stanley Elevator company has begun the mechanical work on one of our original elevators. This means that the 2 original elevators do not currently come to ground floor, only our new elevator does. It has made waiting times a bit longer for everyone, though we try to anticipate this so that it doesn't impact visits.

In addition to working with some of our entertainers on outdoor programs, we have been working to offer some indoor programs soon. The entertainers must wear masks and remain 10 feet away from residents at all times. We are working out schedules in order to offer this in as safe a manner as possible to residents. The outdoor programs have been very well received – though they are weather dependent of course!

It has been a while since I've thanked you all for helping to share this correspondence with all of your family members. The communication seems to have been going well between the primary contact and our social workers, and I really appreciate your role in helping us to keep this as smooth as it has been.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



4/7/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 cases to report in either resident or staff since our last correspondence. We completed 100% staff and resident testing at the beginning of this week and not all results are back yet. Regardless of the results, we still have to complete at least one more round of 100% testing of all staff and residents next week as well.

We are offering window visits and compassionate care visits as we await all results from this first week of testing. Once we get one week of all negative results, we should be able to restart the limited indoor visits, and will alert those who were initially impacted, and then update everyone in our next letter.

Elevator work: we are about to embark on replacing major mechanical components of one of our original elevators. This will mean work is necessary to be done near the reception area. We will try to minimize the impact on visitation, but wanted you to be aware of the planned work. All workers from the elevator company have to comply with the same strict protocols as our staff and will undergo active daily screening and will wear masks and keep their distance from staff they may encounter.

We have been trying some new ways of offering entertainment to our residents. We have had a few entertainers set up outdoors where residents can see/hear from our new balconies, and we have been able to bring some residents down to the front of the building. We maintain necessary spacing and residents wear masks. The entertainer does not come within 10 feet of any resident. The weather is a major factor, but we are hopeful with better weather coming along, that we can continue to offer this limited form of live entertainment.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



4/1/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have just learned of a new positive test in a part time non-clinical worker who does do work on resident floors. This worker did work Tuesday, but has since been out of the building. We have alerted Public Health and the Department of Health and Human Services and will commence 100% resident and staff testing as directed by them.

During this first period of testing time, we have to cancel the limited indoor and outdoor visits, but can continue window visits and compassionate care visits. As always, we will update you with any new findings or new information about resumption of visits.

It's been a while since I've mentioned PPE (personal protective equipment) and just to affirm we have great numbers of this equipment in stock.

As a reminder, we continue to follow all recommendations from the state and Public Health including isolating and testing any resident with any symptoms associated with COVID-19. Similarly, we still screen every single staff member as they enter, and send for testing anyone who has any symptoms associated with COVID-19.

In my letter yesterday, I mentioned that we were proceeding to monthly testing; however, we now will conduct weekly testing for a minimum of 2 weeks. The frequency of future testing will depend on the outcome of these testing weeks.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



3/31/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 cases to report in either resident or staff since our last correspondence. All results have been received from testing last week and all staff and residents are negative. We now move to monthly testing, including testing of any staff or resident who presents with any symptoms on the screening list.

To schedule nursing home visits please call Jeannie Crowder @ 603-283-9409. Assisted Living resident visits are scheduled through Christine Gowen @ 603-399-7348.

A general reminder about visits: drive up to the front, call reception (603-399-4912) and remain in your car for us to actively screen you. Please arrive 15 mins early for an indoor or outdoor visit to allow us the time needed to complete this required screening. For compassionate care visits, please arrive 30 mins in advance due to the lengthy process we must go through for testing, education and documentation.

Window visits do not require screening, but we still need you to schedule them to ensure there is no overlap and so that we can disinfect the area used.

Dr. Keene will be taking a Medical/Surgical leave for a few weeks. During his time away, Pam Morrison, our Physician's Assistant, will increase her days at Maplewood from 2 to 4 days, and Dr. John Walter will come to Maplewood at least one day weekly. As a reminder, your primary contact for resident medical discussions remains the nurse manager for your unit:

2nd floor = Leanne Finnell @ 399-7355.

3rd floor = Lisa Clouet @ 399-7327.

4th/TLC = Stephanie Sullivan @ 399-7337.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



3/23/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 cases to report in either resident or staff since our last correspondence. All results have been received from testing last week and all staff and residents are negative. We are testing all staff and residents again this week.

We are working with families to schedule visits. It's encouraged by Public Health to have visits outdoors when the weather is amenable, but we can now resume limited indoor visits as well as continue compassionate care visits. To schedule nursing home visits please call Jeannie Crowder @ 603-283-9409. Assisted Living resident visits are scheduled through Christine Gowen @ 603-399-7348.

A general reminder about visits: drive up to the front, call reception (603-399-4912) and remain in your car for us to actively screen you. Please arrive 15 mins early for an indoor or outdoor visit to allow us the time needed to complete this required screening. For compassionate care visits, please arrive 30 mins in advance due to the lengthy process we must go through for testing, education and documentation.

Window visits do not require screening, but we still need you to schedule them to ensure there is no overlap and so that we can disinfect the area used.

Everything is subject to change based on many different variables and rules that impact our operations; we endeavor to keep you, the resident or primary contact, up to date. You can best help us to share information we give you with other loved ones who wish to visit.

I am including information put together from the National Center on Law and Elder Rights relative to the stimulus checks. The pamphlet includes frequently asked questions and has contact information if you have additional questions.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator

Nursing Home Residents, Medicaid, and Stimulus Checks: What You Need to Know

Under recent COVID-19 legislation, most nursing facility residents are receiving stimulus payments of up to \$1,200. The Internal Revenue Service will issue these payments in the same way that you receive your Social Security benefit (direct deposit or a paper check by mail).

This money belongs to you, not the nursing facility! This is true even if Medicaid pays for your care and services at the facility.

Will Stimulus Checks Affect My Medicaid Eligibility?

No. Under Medicaid rules, **a stimulus payment is not counted as income**. Therefore, receiving a stimulus payment does not change a resident's monthly payment (often called a "patient pay amount" or "share of cost"). The resident pays the same monthly amount to the nursing facility and keeps the stimulus payment for their own use.

In addition, **the stimulus payment does not count as a Medicaid resource for 12 months**. In other words, for the first year, the payment cannot cause you to have "too much" savings.

EXAMPLE:

An unmarried resident receives \$1,050 monthly Social Security benefit and has \$1,800 in savings. Each month she pays the nursing facility \$1,000 from her income, and keeps \$50 for personal needs.

After receiving the \$1,200 stimulus payment in May 2020, her payment obligation to the nursing facility does not change. She continues to pay \$1,000 monthly.

After receiving the stimulus payment, her savings will increase from \$1,800 to \$3,000. To retain Medicaid eligibility, she must spend down her savings to under \$2,000 within a year—before May 2021.

Are There Restrictions on How I Can Spend the Stimulus Money?

In general, a resident can spend the stimulus money as they wish, including gifts and charitable contributions. This is the resident's money to spend on their wants and needs.

When Will the Check Arrive?

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) began sending stimulus payments on April 17, 2020. Checks are sent the same way checks are currently sent for persons receiving Social Security. All recipients of Social Security benefits, including retirement, survivors, disability (SSDI), and supplemental security income (SSI); Veterans Administration benefits; or Railroad Retirement benefits will receive payment automatically, without any action on their part. If someone is currently receiving benefits through direct deposit, the stimulus payment will arrive through direct deposit as well.

The IRS has created a [guide specifically for Social Security and SSI recipients](#) with questions about their stimulus payments.

Do I Need to File a Tax Return to Receive a Check?

Most residents will not need to do anything. Action is only required if the resident does NOT receive Social Security (including retirement, survivors, disability, and SSI), Veterans Administration, or Railroad Retirement benefits AND did not file a tax return in both 2018 and 2019.

What if I Don't Receive Federal Benefits and Didn't File a Tax Return in Both 2018 and 2019?

To receive your stimulus payment, you should [file online as soon as possible with the Internal Revenue Service](#) (blue button, mid-page).

More Information About the Stimulus Check

- [IRS: Economic Impact Payments: What You Need to Know](#)

Who Else Can I Contact?

Residents, their family, or facility staff can contact the [Long-Term Care Ombudsman program](#) or call the **Elder Care Locator** at 1-800-677-1116.

Please contact ConsultNCLER@acl.hhs.gov for free case consultation assistance. Sign up for our email list and access more resources at [NCLER.acl.gov](https://ncler.acl.gov).



3/11/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 to report in either resident or staff. All tests from last week were negative and we have tested all staff Monday and Tuesday of this week.

We finally received guidance from public health related to the huge discrepancy in percent positivity rates between our state and the Federal rates. We are now permitted to use the state rates and this means we no longer need to test all staff twice a week, and we can resume limited indoor visits. We will begin scheduling those starting Monday March 15th. To book window or limited indoor visits please call:

Nursing home resident visits are scheduled through Jeannie Crowder @ 603-283-9409. Assisted Living resident visits are scheduled through Christine Gowen @ 603-399-7348.

For indoor visits; you must be pre-screened when you book the visit, then screened again including your temperature taken. You must wear a surgical mask to come indoors (we will provide) and you must disinfect your hands before you come in, and after any time that you touch your face or mask. Please see the attachment with the visitor expectations for Maplewood. We apologize for the inconvenience, but we are still being asked to discourage visitors from using our bathrooms.

CDC has released some exciting updates; **outside of nursing homes**, fully vaccinated individuals may visit with other fully vaccinated people indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing. There are other stipulations as well that may hopefully encourage everyone to get vaccinated in order to decrease our need for masking. Currently, even fully vaccinated individuals should wear masks in public and avoid medium to large gatherings. It has been made clear; this does not apply to nursing homes at this time.

Please note; Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) just issued new guidance last evening. We are reviewing this document now.

Public health has updated guidance related to therapy animals, and our recreational therapist, Joe Peron and this therapy dog, Lola meet the standards, so they can visit residents following the strict policy. Another positive change is that our hair dresser also now meets the requirements and she has begun work one day and one unit per week.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator

Visitor Expectations

1. Pull up to the main entrance under the awning and remain in your car on arrival; call 603-399-4912 from your vehicle
2. You will be screened in your car, including a temperature check. We will provide you with a medical mask for any indoor visits (you may use your own cloth mask for outdoor visits)
3. Use hand sanitizer at the start and end of your visit; if you touch your face mask at any point during your visit you must sanitize your hands again
4. You will be required to stay 6 feet from your loved one with the following exception:
5. If the resident is fully vaccinated (2 weeks post last dose) and they choose to have close contact (including touch) with their visitor while wearing a well-fitting face mask and performing hand-hygiene before and after.
6. Sharing food is not allowed (ie. Bag of chips)
7. Your visit may be monitored for infection prevention measures.
8. We apologize, but we are not permitted to allow you to use our bathrooms; please plan accordingly
9. After leaving our facility, monitor yourself for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 for the next 14 days. You should monitor for:
 - a. Fever: 100.0 or greater
 - b. Cough; new or change in baseline not related to a condition (ie COPD) or smoking
 - c. Shortness of breath; new or change unrelated to a condition (ie COPD or asthma)
 - d. Sore throat or Nasal congestion
 - e. Unexplained and new loss of taste or smell
 - f. New GI symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea)
 - g. Dizziness; new – not related to pre-existing conditions
 - h. Malaise – a general feeling of discomfort, illness, or uneasiness
 - i. Chills; new onset of chills or repeated shaking not related to weather
 - j. Muscle pain; new, not related to pre-existing conditions or recent physical activity
 - k. Headaches; new, not related to allergies or pre-existing conditions

If you note any of these symptoms within 2 days of your visit, please contact Maplewood immediately at 603-399-4912 and let us know the date of your visit, the resident and staff you had contact with an which area of the facility you visited.

Only 2 visitors at a time. We will bring the resident to the visit location at the scheduled time. Staff will have disinfected chairs, tables (the phone for window visits) prior to and then after each visit. Staff will remind visitors not to touch their eyes, nose, mouth or face. If any rules are broken at any time, the visit will cease and it will impact future visits. Visitors must remain within the designated area at all times through the visit and 6 feet spacing from staff maintained. Alcohol based sanitizer will be used for hand sanitizing before the visit begins, after touching face or mask during the visit, and at the conclusion of the visit. Face masks must be worn and cover nose and mouth properly throughout the visit.



2/25/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 to report in either resident or staff, but I do have 2 updates I want to give in between our usual weekly letter:

DEW, the construction company who has completed our addition and continues to work on the last phase of renovation, has found some sub-contractors to be positive with covid-19. One sub-contractor noted a sore throat part-way through the day on Friday and left the worksite and was tested. Contact tracing has identified all other subcontractors who may be affected and all were taken off the job and sent for testing. As a reminder, the area they are working on is separated by a fire wall and negative pressure is maintained on the construction site so air does not flow from the renovations into our occupied resident floors. They also have a stairwell that only they use to access the renovated area. There is no resident contact at any time.

The other update is that FedEx has found all of our tests from last week that were delayed in transit due to the severe weather. They have all arrived now to MAKO for testing. MAKO will assess their viability and may proceed with processing last week's tests. At this time all resident tests from this week are back except for 13, and about a quarter of this week's staff tests are back – all negative so far.

We will update you with any new positive cases.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



2/24/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 cases to report in either resident or staff since our last correspondence. Last week all resident tests were done and sent to the public lab as directed by the state, and all results were negative. Last week, all staff tests were sent by FedEx to our usual/contracted lab, however due to the wide range impact of severe storms, not all tests have been delivered. Of note, our staff tests done this past Monday have already reached the lab and we are beginning to receive results from this week's testing. We have been in contact with the state due to last week's transit delays.

The county positivity rate has risen above 10% again, which means that once we are determined to be out of outbreak testing, we once again resume twice a week staff testing and are not permitted indoor visits due to that metric.

We are able to continue with window visits; to book window visits please call:

Nursing home resident visits are scheduled through Jeannie Crowder @ 603-283-9409. Assisted Living resident visits are scheduled through Christine Gowen @ 603-399-7348.

We continue to listen to many different conference calls or other educational opportunities to ensure we are meeting the most up to date guidance and best practices. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) continues to have strict rules that must be adhered to or we risk deficiencies and financial penalties. Unfortunately, CMS has not updated its rules for nursing homes to reflect any changes due to vaccinations. Despite rule changes at our state level, we must continue to adhere to CMS rules including testing frequency and prohibiting visitation when even one staff person tests positive or the county positivity rate exceeds 10%. The manner in which CMS calculates the county positivity rate is very different than how our state calculates it, and unfortunately our local colleges have contributed to ongoing high rates. The CMS numbers also lag by a couple of weeks. We ask for your continued patience while we monitor the positivity rates and watch for updated CMS guidance.

We will continue to update you weekly or more frequently with any new positive cases.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



2/16/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have a new positive test in a part time non-clinical worker with no resident contact. All resident tests and all other staff tests have been negative since our last correspondence. We tested 100% of residents yesterday and are beginning re-testing of all staff again today and tomorrow. We have alerted public health and the Department of Health and Human Services about this new case.

We are still required to have 2 weeks of all negative tests before we can resume limited indoor visits. At this time, we can continue to offer window visits; to book window visits please call:

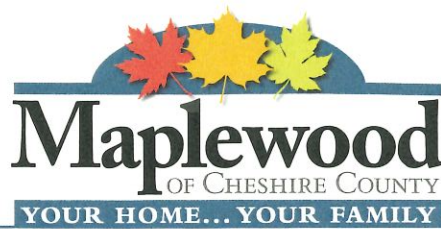
Nursing home resident visits are scheduled through Jeannie Crowder @ 603-283-9409. Assisted Living resident visits are scheduled through Christine Gowen @ 603-399-7348.

Yesterday was our 3rd and final vaccination clinic. All residents are now vaccinated and approximately 75% of staff is fully vaccinated. Full efficacy of the Pfizer vaccine is believed to be at 1 week post second dose, however, most guidance documents simplify by indicating full efficacy occurs 2 weeks after the second dose (which is the actual time for the efficacy of the Moderna vaccine). We will work with newly admitted residents to facilitate vaccinations from the sites offering vaccines. We are also keeping staff apprised of opportunities for vaccinations.

We will continue to update you weekly or more frequently with any new positive cases.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



2/10/2020

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 cases to report in either resident or staff since our last correspondence. Last week we completed the second round of staff testing with no new positive tests found. This week, we tested all residents on Monday, and all staff has been tested Tuesday and into Wednesday. We need 2 weeks total of all negative tests to resume limited in-person visits. We are able to continue with window visits; to book window visits please call:

Nursing home resident visits are scheduled through Jeannie Crowder @ 603-283-9409. Assisted Living resident visits are scheduled through Christine Gowen @ 603-399-7348.

Monday February 15th will be our last vaccination clinic. If all goes as planned, at the conclusion of that day we will have all residents fully vaccinated with the exception of any newly admitted residents. The state has not fully outlined a supportive plan for long term care facilities in order to get vaccines to newly admitted residents. Those who are able can get vaccinated through the community sites, though that may not be feasible for all new residents. We will continue to work with any vaccination opportunities available for new residents going forwards.

We will continue to update you weekly or more frequently with any new positive cases.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



2/4/2020

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have just learned of a new positive test in a part time clinical worker. This worker has worked this week, but is now out of the building and has been symptom free. We are in the middle of testing 100% of our staff for the second time this week and will follow any new guidance from public health and the Department of Health and Human Services.

As I've written in the past, even one positive case in a worker is considered and outbreak, and unfortunately, this eliminates our ability to offer the limited indoor visits. At this time, we can continue to offer window visits.

At this stage, 100% of all residents from both the nursing home as well as the assisted living side have had their first dose of vaccine, and approximately 95% of residents have additionally had their second dose and the requisite time frame for full possible efficacy the vaccine offers. Approximately 75% of the staff has had at least their first dose and approximately 50% of our staff is fully vaccinated with both doses and the requisite time for full possible efficacy of the vaccine.

Our 3rd and final clinic through the federal partnership is scheduled for Monday February 15th. We will continue to update you weekly or more frequently with any new positive cases.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



2/3/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 cases to report in either resident or staff since our last correspondence. Last week the county positivity rate was well above 10%, and this week, it has reduced to 9.6%. This means we continue twice a week testing of staff until the rate remains below this level for 2 weeks. It also means that we can resume the limited indoor visits. We will prepare this week and begin to schedule some indoor visits as of Monday February 8th. Please refer to the insert relative to visitor expectations as a reminder of our process. To book window or limited indoor visits please call:

Nursing home resident visits are scheduled through Jeannie Crowder @ 603-283-9409. Assisted Living resident visits are scheduled through Christine Gowen @ 603-399-7348.

We are beginning to field vaccination questions from families; namely once a family member is vaccinated, can they come in? The answer is that all long term care facilities must still follow Federal rules and state guidance. At this time, there has not been any change in rules, nor guidance relative to vaccinations. Ongoing testing and time will help determine if those vaccinated will still be able to get some form of mild COVID-19 and more concerning – still transmit it. It is encouraging to learn that people in our community are accepting the vaccinations.

I want to remind you that despite being permitted to do some limited indoor visits, our hair dresser is still not permitted back in the building to care for our residents' hair needs at this time. Everyone is anxious to get this program re-started, and we will absolutely do so once the state permits this once again!

Monday February 15th is our last vaccination clinic – due to the need to focus on this large all day event plus the effect on parking, we will not be offering visits on that particular day.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



1/27/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

We have no covid-19 cases to report in either resident or staff since our last correspondence. Public Health has lifted us out of 'outbreak' status, and we resume staff-only testing. Due to our county positivity rate being well over 10% on the Federal charts, we must test all staff twice a week. As long as our county remains above 10% positivity rate on the Federal scale, we remain restricted from the limited indoor visits. We are able to resume window visits:

To schedule window visits for nursing home residents please call Jeannie Crowder @ 603-283-9409. Assisted Living resident visits are scheduled through Christine Gowen @ 603-399-7348.

Our vaccine clinic was a great success on Monday. We worked again with the CVS pharmacy, and 100% of our residents have at least one, but almost all now have the second dose of vaccine. We now have 75% of our staff with at least 1, but most now have the second dose. Our last vaccine clinic is scheduled for February 15th.

Our team is processing the difficult news of the loss of a young staff member this past weekend. This was not as a direct result of the virus. We are working to support our staff through their grief, and wanted to share this incredibly sad news with you in case you sensed anything while communicating with us. We hope to be able to do something to honor her at a later time with our staff.

I mentioned last week that we are tired from this long crisis, and health care workers have truly been at the forefront of many day to day challenges of figuring out how to operate while rules and circumstances change quickly. The stress is certainly taking its toll and while we look very much forward to having families and visitors return at some point, we will all need to prepare for that time. Perhaps for some it will be very joyous, but understandably it may be very difficult to come back in a see the changes a year or more brings to your loved ones when you can't be right with them. My greatest hope is that staff and families can support one another through the reopening phase whenever that may come.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



1/20/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

All resident and staff tests from last week were negative. We again tested 100% of staff and residents in these past 2 days, so we will be expecting results at the end of the week. We need 2 weeks in a row of all negative tests for public health to change the current course of action. Until then, we continue using special masks and goggles/eye protection on the resident units at all times, and gowns and gloves additionally for any direct care we give the residents.

We are still not permitted in-person visits, however we can help connect you via video chats. Kendra Pahl can help to schedule video chats @ 603-399-7376.

Last week I mentioned new public health guidance, however, in a state-wide call just after I sent the letter, public health reminded us that some of the quarantine rules we follow are set at the Federal level by CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services). This means that at times, our state will once again have slightly different guidance for nursing homes as compared to Federal rules. These pertain to visitation, testing and quarantine. We will watch for and eagerly await updated rules from CMS.

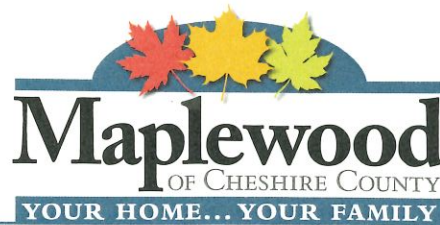
Our next vaccine clinic is still scheduled for Monday January 25th; nearly all the residents are planning to receive either their second dose, or for a couple, their first dose. We have also worked very hard to get more staff signed up for their first dose. About half of our staff will be receiving their second dose next week.

I've met with each worker this week to remind them of the next vaccination clinic. Many are excited to receive their second (and for some their first) dose. Others remain skeptical despite our educational efforts. Some have met with their medical providers and are currently advised against vaccination at this time due to their particular medical issues. We will continue to work with our staff to facilitate vaccination options after our Federal program ends with the CVS pharmacy.

Everyone is quite tired from this pandemic and the altered living it has brought each of us. Many of us see the vaccine as a bit of light at the end of the long tunnel we've been navigating. I'll be very glad once all of our residents have received both vaccinations and should be protected from the worst of the virus outcomes. It still remains to be seen if people may still test positive long after the second dose and present with no symptoms after an exposure.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



1/13/2021

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

There were no other positive test results to report in either staff or residents from last week. We again tested 100% of staff and residents in these past 2 days, so we will be expecting results at the end of the week. We continue to increase precautions taken with any resident presenting with any symptom associated with this virus. We use a rapid test as an early indicator while we await the more accurate PCR test that goes out to a lab and takes longer for results to return. We are working proactively in light of the high rates of positivity in Cheshire County.

We are still not permitted in-person visits, however we can help connect you via video chats. Jeannie Crowder can help to schedule video chats @ 603-283-9409.

We understand that approximately 1-2 weeks after each person has completed the second dose of the Pfizer vaccine, that a rate of 95% effectiveness against getting ill is expected. Of the 5% in the study that did get the virus, less severe cases were reported. We know that the vaccine can't give anyone the virus (there is no live virus in the dose), however, we are all still at risk in these couple of weeks before the second dose is administered and subsequently the additional 1-2 weeks before maximal coverage is expected to be achieved.

We've learned that the ideal time between the 2 Pfizer doses is 3 weeks, and that is the time our next vaccine clinic is scheduled. We have also learned from our public health department, that the second dose can be just as effective if it needs to be given beyond the 3 week interval.

Some new public health guidance is emerging regarding quarantine. Vaccine recipients who are 2 weeks or more beyond their second dose of vaccine will not need to quarantine for certain circumstances. For example, currently if a resident requires an overnight hospital stay, upon return they must quarantine in a single room for 2 weeks. Once a vaccinated resident is at least 2 weeks post second dose, they will no longer be required to quarantine due to concerns over COVID-19 (other infectious disease protocols would still be in place as always).

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator



1/6/2020

Dear Residents/Families/Responsible parties,

I'm going to lead with the fact that all surveillance PCR lab tests on all residents and staff from last week came back negative. That said, we have a new positive case to report to you at this time; it is a direct care worker that was tested along with all the staff last week. This worker last worked on 12/30 then developed symptoms on a later date and appropriately went for a rapid test that came back negative. The following day had a follow up PCR test (lab based test that we do and takes at least a day or two to get results and is the most accurate test) and this came back positive. This week, we will again test 100% of residents and staff, and as always, will update you with any found cases.

We continue with our contact with public health and the Department of Health and Human Services with these updates and we follow any additional guidance they give us.

I'll remind you that we actively screen all staff prior to each shift. It's rare that we determine at the screening process that a staff needs to be sent away for testing and await results before returning to work. What we do find is that staff know that with any (even minor) symptom that can be associated with COVID-19, they alert their supervisor; they don't come in, and they know and/or we remind them that they need to get a PCR COVID-19 test, and are unable to return until they receive negative results.

We hosted the first CVS vaccination clinic on January 4th. We were able to inoculate 97% of our residents and approximately 50% of all of our staff with the first of two doses of the Pfizer vaccine. The next 2 dates for the CVS pharmacy to return to us are Jan 25th, followed by February 15th. A team of 8 including pharmacists and technicians arrived shortly after 9am, and worked with our team until well after 6pm to get through all the residents and staff who were waiting. It was a long day and we are so thankful to have had help from administrative staff, who along with many managers from Maplewood, took on some of the heavy lifting for paperwork and staff organization. The nurse management team and ALF administrator facilitated the resident vaccinations with the CVS team. Administering the vaccine and monitoring everyone after their shot was the easiest part of the day, all of the administrative work, line listings, and multiple data entry for many different agencies was really the most time consuming part of the vaccination process.

Stay well, and stay safe! Sincerely,

Kathryn Kindopp, Administrator