

09/30/20

To Our Residents and Family Members:

As you know, nursing homes have been severely impacted by COVID-19 across the country, with outbreaks causing increased rates of infection, morbidity, and mortality. The vulnerable nature of the nursing home population combined with inherent risks of congregate living in a healthcare setting have required aggressive efforts to limit COVID-19 exposure and to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within nursing homes. The governing agencies recognize the importance of addressing the psychosocial needs of residents however and have made changes to visitation guidelines.

We are pleased to announce that CMS recently released new guidance that will allow nursing homes to open for visitation during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE). To ensure nursing home residents have the opportunity to visit with their loved ones in a safe, protective environment, Kissito Healthcare will be opening our facilities for visitation under the following guidelines that are consistent with CMS/CDC guidance.

The following guidance has been developed to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission:

- Screening of all individuals who wish to visit with a resident for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Individuals must pass the screening questionnaire before the visitation is permitted. Kissito Healthcare facilities have the right to deny visitation to anyone with signs and symptoms of any type of illness.
- Individuals wishing to visit **must present negative COVID-19 test documentation dated within 72 hours** of the visit.
- Visitation is by appointment only. Please contact the facility directly to schedule an appointment for visitation.
- Visitation will be limited to 30 minutes and only 2 visitors per resident. One visit per resident will be permitted each week.
- Visitation will take place in a designated location (either outdoor or indoor). Visitors will not be permitted in resident's rooms or in other areas of the facility.
- Infection control practices must be strictly adhered to, including hand hygiene, social distancing of 6 feet and face covers are to be worn at all times during the visits. Anyone unable to adhere to the infection control practices or understand these practices will not be allowed to visit.
- Weather permitting, visitation will be scheduled outdoors in designated areas. Staff members will monitor the visitation areas during the visits while providing residents and visitors privacy.
- Visitation will be moved indoors during times of inclement weather to designated areas. Visitors will wait outside until they are deemed safe to visit, which will be determined by passing the screening questionnaire and presenting a copy of negative COVID-19 results dated within the past 72 hours.
- Visitation protocols are subject to change based on new onset of COVID-19 cases and County positivity rate, or changes to CMS/CDC guidance.
- Please refrain from bringing gifts or food items to your visit.
- **Please arrive 15 minutes early** to all visitation appointments. Punctuality is very important to secure appointment times and to complete pre-visit screening.
- Visitation will take place **from 10am-4pm every day, by appointment only.**

These core principles are consistent with the CDC guidance for nursing homes and should be adhered to at all times. To further reduce the risk of transmission, Kissito Healthcare will be using physical barriers, such as Plexiglas dividers, during visitation. Currently, we are in the final planning stages of opening our facilities for visitation. Appointments will be available **starting October 13, 2020**. During the initial stages of reopening, a negative COVID-19 test within the last 72 hours will be required, however, we will continue to provide updates on our visitation protocols as CMS guidance changes. **Please contact our Center directly at 910-293-3144 to schedule visitation.** We are excited to be progressing through the stages of reopening, and plan to do so in a safe and protective manner. Should you have any questions please contact us directly.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Smith

Chief Administrative Officer