

05/10/21

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 revised guidance that will allow nursing homes to enhance 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.
- Visitation is by appointment only. Please contact the facility directly to schedule an appointment for visitation.
- Visitation will be limited to one hour and two visitors per resident.
- Visitation will take place in a designated area of the Center, both indoors and outdoors. **Outdoor visitation is preferred when the weather permits, even when residents and visitors are fully vaccinated.**
- Visitors may be required to present evidence of vaccination status, depending on the location of visit.
- In room visitation may occur if both the resident and visitor have been fully vaccinated. While alone in the resident's room or the designated visitation room, residents and their visitor(s) can choose to have close contact (including touch) and to not wear source control masks, if fully vaccinated. Visitation will not be permitted in resident rooms if a resident has a roommate that is unvaccinated.
- Visitors will be escorted to and from the designated visitation areas. Face coverings should be worn at all times when walking to and from visitation areas. Face coverings may be removed when in the resident's room and close contact is permitted if both the resident and visitor(s) are fully vaccinated.
- Infection control practices must be strictly adhered to, including hand hygiene, social distancing of 6 feet and face covers are encouraged during the visits. Anyone unable to adhere to the infection control practices or understand these practices will not be allowed to visit.
- Compassionate care visits, and visits required under federal disability rights law, will be allowed at all times, regardless of a resident's vaccination status.
- Visitation protocols are subject to change based on new onset of COVID-19 cases and County positivity rate, or changes to CMS/CDC guidance.
- Food and gift items are permitted to be brought to the resident if desired.
- **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 Monday-Friday, and 12pm-4pm on Saturday-Sunday, 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. **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