



August 31, 2020

To the Staff and Families of Timber Ridge,

We are thankful to report that we continue to not have any positive COVID-19 cases at our Timber Ridge facility. Many thanks to our staff for their faithfulness in continuing to practice careful hand hygiene, wearing of PPE including face coverings, cleaning and disinfecting, and social distancing. I continue to be impressed by staff's attitude and diligence as well as their ability to keep a positive and creative outlook for our residents as the days and weeks turn into months and the pandemic continues.

I know that many of you wonder what is next as we slowly work our way back toward "normal". I want to let you know briefly of a couple of changes this week and what to expect in the future as things progress.

1. Residents will resume attending some form of a day program tomorrow on September 1<sup>st</sup>. EPIC and TCRC are both reopening with extensive safety protocols and plans in place to help prevent the spread of the virus. We have assessed every resident as we try to determine what is the best immediate next step for them. Because of some of the restrictions that EPIC has had to put in place, we will not have any Timber Ridge residents returning there initially. We hope that will come at a later date. We do have a few residents who will begin attending TCRC again, but for most of our residents this will currently mean they attend our in house day program. We are very thankful to have this program available, and we have worked hard to prepare a variety of safe classrooms within our facility for residents to attend. We will continue to adapt as we learn how this works over the next several weeks, but we are excited to have some structure and a sense of normalcy returning in this area. Thank you for your patience and please continue to ask questions, we will do our best to answer.
2. About two weeks ago Illinois Department of Public Health released long awaited guidance for the reopening of long term care facilities like ours. It contained a lot of information, and we have spent quite a bit of time understanding what it means for Timber Ridge today and moving forward. Based on their guidance, as of today Timber Ridge is in what they are calling CMS Phase 2 for reopening. This actually has little impact or change on what we are currently doing. It allows for outdoor visitation to continue, but does not yet provide for indoor visits or home visits. There is a combination of things that need to occur locally and internally before we will be able to move to the next phase. In the next phase we would start to allow indoor visitation in a controlled setting. We will keep you posted as things change, but in all likelihood it will be several weeks as one of the benchmarks we need to see is for our local positivity rates decrease for at least 14 days before considering a change in phase. Those rates have been steadily increasing since July, so that is a significant change that needs to happen locally before we see additional changes in what we are able to do here.

Thank you for your continued patience and prayers as we continue to try to "do the next right thing".

Sincerely,

*Darrell Stoller*

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