Dear Resident, Family Member or Responsible Party,

We want to take this opportunity to update you about measures being taken to protect the rights, health and safety of nursing home residents. We know that our nursing home residents are in the high risk of infection from COVID-19. We also know that appropriate PPE, testing and cohorting (the act of grouping together people with alike symptoms or diagnosis) are the key to controlling the spread in nursing homes.

Since this pandemic began, we have been constrained due to having a limited number of test kits and supplies necessary to test all nursing home residents. However, we are now at a point where supplies and testing capability have become available. This mean that testing for all nursing home residents can now begin. The Department of Public Health and the National Guard will be working with the nursing homes to test every resident, both symptomatic and asymptomatic.

Once tested, residents will be appropriately cohorted. This may require a room change within the nursing home. Please know that the resident and family member will be notified prior to the room change, but this is a necessary step in the process to protect the resident’s health. Residents who refuse testing will need to be cohorted with individuals of an alike status or COVID-19 unknown for 14 days.

We want to assure you that residents and family members will be informed throughout this process.Regular testing will continue until public health officials feel there is no longer a risk.With this level of testing the state will try to identify areas with the most risk and posing the highest level of concern. They will strategically focus their response to assist nursing homes and appropriately respond to the needs of their residents.

We are encouraged as we have started to hear stories of nursing home residents getting well and getting people back to health. This is thanks to the dedicated front-line staff and the ability to advance procedure as new guidance has been developed. This is one more step in the advancements being made to address this pandemic in long term care settings.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or concerns as this process moves forward. We know this is a lot of information and again we will do our best to keep you fully informed as we procced.

Thank you,