

September 1, 2021



Dear Residents and Loved Ones,

Since the onset of the pandemic, our team has been focused intently on executing our COVID-19 preparedness and response plan. In March of 2020, we began holding multiple COVID-19 preparedness conference calls each week with our home office team. The purpose of these calls has been to share COVID-19 information, education resources and to provide clarification surrounding the details of our COVID-19 preparedness and response plan.

Over the course of the last two months, we have watched the number of positive cases steadily increase across the country and in our local area. The Delta variant has proven to be more contagious and more impactful than the original COVID-19 strand, and new variants continue to emerge.

*"Caring with H.E.A.R.T."* is our guiding principle and each letter in H.E.A.R.T. represents one of our Core Values. The "R" represents "Residents First" and is a reminder that our primary mission is to care for and serve the residents we love dearly. In holding true to our commitment to putting our residents first and to ensuring the safety of our team members, loved ones and visitors, we are announcing that our community will require all team members receive the COVID-19 vaccine by December 1, 2021, as a condition of employment. This timeline will allow some of our existing team members to complete additional research and to speak with their physician about the vaccine. Any new team members joining our team shall have 45-days from their date of hire to be fully vaccinated. In those rare occasions when a team member is not able to receive the vaccine due to a medical condition or a religious belief, we will provide a process for requesting an exemption.

The data has proven that people who are vaccinated are much less likely to contract COVID-19 and when they do, experience significantly less severe symptoms than those who are unvaccinated. While nearly all our residents are vaccinated, vaccinated seniors are still the most at-risk of having significant symptoms and hospitalizations. It is imperative that we do all we can to keep our residents safe. The FDA announcement on August 23, granting full approval to Pfizer/BioNTech for their COVID-19 vaccine is an exciting step that is anticipated to help reduce vaccine hesitancy.

We remain as focused as ever on our planning and prevention efforts but given the rate of new positive cases each day, we know that there is a high probability that we will have positive cases at the Community. To help protect the Community prior to December 1, we will continue our practice of testing all unvaccinated team members twice each week and we will also rollout testing for unvaccinated private-duty aides who are regularly at the community.

We are proud to join the growing list of senior living and health care providers requiring COVID-19 vaccinations for team members. United, we can win this fight against COVID-19.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me, or email me.

When we are Caring with H.E.A.R.T.™, We are All Family!

Sincerely,

Jo Clare Hanshew, NHA

Executive Director

Bellaire at Devonshire

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