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Saint Mary's & COVID-19: Update #23

Good Afternoon!

We continue our path at both campuses of reporting zero cases of COVID-19. All week we have been making preparations to begin moving through the reopening steps. Each campus will move into a different "step" next week.

Saint Mary's at Asbury Ridge is advancing directly to step two on August 24th. This means Asbury Ridge is gearing up for outdoor visitation, opening up activities to 10 or less residents, allowing non-essential personnel as deemed necessary, and utilizing volunteers to assist with visitation only. Saint Mary's East is advancing to step one on August 25th. This means East can begin considering things like communal dining and conducting activities with 5 or less residents. The East campus is two weeks behind Asbury Ridge for entering step two and allowing outdoor visitation due to the timing of the most recent positive COVID-19 case and the testing that subsequently took place. We anticipate East entering step two on September 8th.

To help address some of your visitation questions, a document is attached and will be shared on our website that outlines some general information. As always, please let us know if you have any questions but keep in mind this will be a learning experience for all of us because this is something entirely new. We appreciate your patience as work out any kinks in the plan. You will also have a chance to review details and ask questions when social services contacts the family for an initial visit. Additionally, as you've probably experienced yourself, understanding what someone is saying behind a facemask can be a bit difficult. This can be especially challenging for adults with hearing loss. Here are some quick tips to help make communication easier during your visit:

- **Use Body Language** – Your posture, hand movements and facial expressions help provide context when lip reading is not an option. Position your body directly towards the listener, lift your eyebrows, smile with your eyes, and emphasize what you are saying by using your hands.
- **Slow Down** – Take your time when talking. Speak slowly and be sure to enunciate. Consonants are some of the most commonly lost parts of verbal communication when wearing a mask. If something was not understood, try rephrasing it rather than repeating it.
- **Speak up** – Talk louder than you normally would. Your mask, the social distance, and the background noise from being outside will likely muffle your voice.
- **Make Eye Contact** – Our eyes show emotion and interest. Eye contact provides a cue to the listener that someone is speaking to them and that they should give them their attention.

P.S. –Voting for the 2020 Erie's Choice Awards is open and Saint Mary's is a finalist in two categories! Help us recognize and celebrate the amazing community at Saint Mary's by submitting your vote today and spreading the word. See the attached flyer for more details and vote for us in two categories – "Retirement/Senior Living Facility" and "Rehabilitation Facility" – at erieschoice.com. We're grateful for your support!