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Saint Mary's & COVID-19: Update #21

Greetings!

Both Saint Mary's East and Saint Mary's at Asbury Ridge continue to have zero active cases of COVID-19.

This is good news for everyone – and we have more to share. As conditions allow, we will gradually begin entering a three-step reopening plan. This plan will follow the guidance set forth by the Pennsylvania Department of Health. While the plan does not mean a return to normal operations, it does allow for controlled forms of visitations in later steps.

On our website you will find an “Implementation Plan for Reopening” document. It outlines certain issues like strategies for testing, staffing, screening protocols, reintroduction of resident activities and dining, non-essential personnel, and visitation. The most important thing to keep in mind as we move forward with this plan is that it will likely change. In fact, we expect it to change. We will continue to share any changes on our website and communicate them with you as best as possible.

The part we know families are most interested in is visitation, which is allowable in steps two and three. Each campus will likely enter reopening at a different time and at a different step in the coming weeks. Before advancing from one step to the next, each campus must achieve 14 consecutive days of no new onset of COVID-19. This means that visitation is still a few weeks away but if we can accomplish these steps, visitation could potentially occur around the end of August and/or in early September. Dates are not set in stone. If at any point there is a new case of COVID-19 we will have to halt reopening, return to previous restrictions, and start over again after a new period of 14 days with no cases.

What will visitation look like? In addition to the document referred to above, families will be receiving a letter with some more information about the reopening plan in the next few days and it will also be shared on the website. In step one, not much changes. In step two, visitation can be held outside in the neighborhood patio areas. In step three, visitation may occur inside but in neutral zones only, such as our main lobbies. Visits will not take place in any resident areas. These supervised visits must be scheduled in advance and will be limited in both length and in the number of visitors per resident. Visiting hours will be designated to certain times in the morning, afternoon and evening to accommodate different schedules. Social Services will be contacting each family to schedule an initial time for visitation. They'll provide details on when and where to arrive, what to expect and what the screening process will entail. We know it's hard but we ask that for now you please wait to be contacted. This will allow us to work to give every resident and family an opportunity to visit before considering repeat visits.

While we encourage hopefulness, we still want to stay grounded in reality and remind you once more that this plan could change at any time. We ask you to remain flexible in your expectations. Your patience, understanding and ability to adapt to changing circumstances so far has been wonderful and we continue to be grateful!