

## **Buckner Retirement Services Weekly Update May 11, 2020**

Dear Buckner Residents and Families,

This is still serious.

As more businesses have started reopening, we are seeing a rush to restaurants, barbershops, and hair salons. But for Buckner senior living communities, the threat of the coronavirus and COVID-19 is still serious and the health and safety of residents and associates at our six communities is top-of-mind for us.

While Gov. Greg Abbott issued guidelines for businesses to resume operations, the guidance provided is very specific, including directions for long-term care communities. In summary, the phased reopening we are currently seeing does not affect how we have been operating at Buckner over the past two months.

We will continue being guided by the standards of the [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), as we have since the outbreak of the pandemic, as well as the Center for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) and the Texas Health and Human Services (HHS). **As the state begins to reopen the economy, we remain committed to ensuring the health and safety of all stakeholders.**

Some of the questions we are being asked in light of changes we are seeing include:

### **Can I visit?**

We are continuing under the policy we established two months ago and restricting access to our communities to only associates and essential non-Buckner private caregivers. **Our visitation restrictions are unchanged.**

### **Can a resident leave the community?**

Buckner serves residents in different levels of care, including independent living, assisted living, skilled nursing, and memory care. Those living in independent living were previously subject to stay-at-home orders, however we are now seeing that those orders are being lifted across Texas. For the most part, independent living residents are free to come and go from the community as they wish based on the community's specific county orders. However, it is critically important that these residents go above and beyond in taking personal responsibility for their exposure and understand the continued screening measures required for re-entry into the community:

- All independent living residents are subject to a thorough screening process upon re-entering the community.
- Re-entry must take place through a dedicated entrance.
- Face coverings must be worn when outside of your personal residence.

- Certain common areas remain closed, such as dining areas, therefore residents should restrict movements to other areas of all buildings and maintain social distancing practices.

All other areas or levels of care at all Buckner communities remain strictly under orders from Gov. Abbott. Residents in any area other than independent living are not allowed to leave the community and return.

### **What is Buckner planning?**

While very little has changed at our Buckner communities since businesses began reopening, we are continually monitoring the ever-changing nature of the pandemic and like you, we are anxious for normalcy.

Each community is developing a plan to open the independent living hair salon and resume limited housekeeping services – I know everyone is looking forward to this, so please stay tuned for communication from our local Buckner leaders.

Our priority is safety for all residents and associates, and I am grateful for your patience during these unusual days. I have appointed a task force that is planning a very slow return to normal conditions that includes a number of phases to get us there. We do not anticipate this to happen all at once, therefore we ask for your continued cooperation. Regardless of any amended guidelines from the government, we will make decisions we believe are in the best interest of residents and associates.

Our teams are committed to continuing the holistic approach at Buckner that along with physical care, includes emotional, spiritual, and social care. To that end, we are launching a number of initiatives in each community. Let me encourage you to follow each of our Buckner senior living communities on social media to see what is happening. Among the initiatives launched to create social interaction are:

#### The Gold Ribbon Campaign:

We are launching the **Going Gold for Senior Living** initiative, a gold ribbon support campaign designed to highlight and encourage senior living residents and staff. I hope you will join us in supporting our residents and staff by displaying a gold ribbon outside your home.

Today, May 11, complimentary gold ribbons are available to families via a drive-thru pick-up. Please check your community's Facebook page for the specific time – and tag us in any social media posts displaying your ribbon.

#### Adopt-a-Community:

Chaplains at each of the Buckner communities are recruiting local churches and other groups to adopt our communities. Church members will come to each community's parking lot with signs and show support for residents and associates from the safety of their vehicles.

Ventana by Buckner, our Dallas community, had groups from several local churches visit last week. We received coverage on a local television station and you can read about it [here](#).

Resources:

We provide real-time status about the coronavirus on our [website](#) for residents, families, and staff. Let me encourage you to check it often. In addition to the website, we are utilizing a system called OneCall that allows us to automatically contact you through voice and text messages. We are working hard to make sure our community alerts reach each resident's family, and we appreciate your feedback and understanding as we improve the process.

Each week, we also print out hard copies of any PUI notifications and provide those direct to residents in their rooms. In the unfortunate event there is a positive test, we will utilize all the above forms of communication as well as mail printed notifications to family listed by the resident as the primary contact.

Will you help us? During this process, we want to ensure you receive timely information. **Will you contact your Buckner community and confirm your cell phone number and email address?** This helps us get information to you quickly.

We are grateful for the opportunity to serve you. We are doing our best to communicate regularly so you feel informed and up to date. I hope that if you have any questions, you will reach out to the leadership at your local community.

Sincerely,  
Charlie Wilson  
Senior Vice President  
Buckner Retirement Services