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MEMORANDUM

To: Residents and Families
From: Charlie Wilson, Senior Vice President
Date: May 18, 2020
Re: Understanding Gov. Abbott's Testing Order & Our Response

Texas Governor Greg Abbott issued an order May 11 to “test 100% of residents and staff in Texas nursing homes.” In the order, he tasked the planning and execution of testing to the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) and Department of State Health Services (DSHS).

While the Governor’s mandate is specific to nursing, we believe widespread testing of our entire communities, including Independent Living, is a great opportunity to receive vital information needed to further mitigate risk for all residents and associates. We are working to make this available to anyone who chooses to participate; however, there are still numerous details we need to coordinate with the state to comply with the testing mandate and ensure the process is as safe and efficient as possible.

Here is what we know about the testing:

1. Government officials will work with us to find a date that allows us to notify residents, family members, and associates with enough time to minimize the disruption on our communities; however, we realize the notice may be shorter than we would prefer.
2. Test results will reportedly come back in three to five days, though it could be longer based on the scope of testing the state is conducting. When we have results, we will provide a community-wide update on our website while anyone with positive results will be contacted directly along with their emergency contact.
3. Testing will help us learn if we have any asymptomatic positive residents or associates. This means people are not displaying symptoms of the virus but can still transmit the virus and pose a direct threat to the health of others.
4. We will require signed consent forms from residents for participating in the testing to be administered. Protocols provided by the governmental agencies tasked with planning and execution of the testing ordered by the Governor will be followed should a resident decline to consent.
5. We will require all associates to participate in the Governor’s mandated testing but will also require signed consent forms from associates for testing.

As of this date, we do not have any positive COVID-19 cases among residents or associates at any Buckner community, and for this, we are grateful. However, we want to be realistic about what 100% testing of the community means. **Based on what other communities around the country are experiencing, we believe it is likely testing will reveal some asymptomatic residents or staff – and we are going to be prepared.**

In the event a resident or associate test positive, we will take the following steps:

1. Notify any resident testing positive immediately, as well as their emergency contact.
2. Notify any associate testing positive immediately.
3. Notify all residents, family and associates immediately of the overall results, while respecting the privacy requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Notifications will be made to residents via printed letters and to emergency contacts via our OneCall text message, email and phone service. Letters will also be mailed to emergency contacts.
4. Isolation procedures will immediately go into place for residents, while associates will quarantine at home until approved to return to work by a healthcare professional and in line with HHSC and CDC guidelines.
5. Contact tracing will go into effect so that those who came into contact with the positive person can self-quarantine based on the CDC's guidance regarding potential exposure and return to work strategies.
6. Schedule secondary testing to secure confirmatory results.
7. Examine any community restrictions that were previously lifted and will likely implement them once again.

Please continue to visit the BRS website (www.BucknerRetirement.org) for a real-time tracker of any PUIs or cases our communities may have. You may call 855-754-3338 with questions at any time.

The safety and protection of those we serve and our staff are the highest priorities for Buckner Retirement Services. Thank you for your patience and understanding during this unprecedented time. Your continued support is essential as we take the next steps towards overcoming this pandemic. We are committed to keeping you informed, mitigating risk for residents and giving peace of mind to family members.

Please consider sharing this information with family members.