



COVID-19 UPDATE
AND OTHER HELPFUL INFORMATION

For Residents, Family Members, and Staff
Tuesday, September 1, 2020

Through our routine surveillance testing last week, we learned that a Health Center staff member working on our Nursing wing tested positive for Coronavirus. This individual has exhibited no symptoms, is isolated away from The Pines, and is receiving medical attention. All Health Center residents and staff (Nursing, Memory Care and Assisted Living wings) are currently being tested for COVID-19.

New COVID-19 Case as of: 9/1/20

Health Center Staff: 1 Case

Cumulative Active COVID-19 Cases at The Pines as of: 9/1/20

Health Center Staff: 1 Case

A MESSAGE FROM STEVE JEWELL, PRESIDENT

We thought it would be helpful to share with you in greater detail the reasoning and data that have shaped our evolving approach to the current safety practices that relate to residents returning to The Pines after leaving campus.

For several months now specifically with respect to COVID-19, The Pines has taken a cautious, conservative approach to establishing campus guidelines designed to keep residents and staff safe and virus-free. These measures have been largely successful due in large part to resident and staff vigilance in adhering to the basic personal safety practices on campus. As an insulated community, we follow public health guidelines and constantly evaluate best practices for applicability on our campus. This is our responsibility to our Pines community,

and it remains our overarching mission as long as COVID-19 continues to present such high-risk factors.

This does not mean, however, that we should remain static in our approach to campus activities. Safety and health considerations must work in tandem with an active, engaging quality of life. The question before us is how to relax restrictions that separate residents who have left our campus and then return to The Pines?

We have been carefully examining what “loosening” restrictions might mean in practice - and how far we might move from the cautious, conservative approach of these past months to a less restrictive environment - while still guarding the safe haven we have established. Any less restrictive approach must still feel safe for all residents, the majority of whom have chosen to remain on campus and use supportive staff services to help them handle their off-campus needs.

Please keep in mind that the average age of our IL population is 84 (and therefore at *much* higher risk), and over a recent 14-day period about 60% of this population remained on campus, while 40% have traveled off campus. Here are three approaches that have informed our policy. Each approach offers a different degree and length of activity restriction for residents who have traveled off campus and then returned.

- **Approach A** - Residents are all grouped into one of two categories based upon their travel within a certain period of time (such as a recent 14-day period).
 - a. Group 1 includes those residents who have remained on campus; Group 2 includes those who have left campus.
 - b. Group 1 residents would be included in all campus activities. Group 2 residents would be prohibited from participating in many campus activities with Group 1, due to their potential off-campus exposure.
 - c. Approach A best describes the practice that The Pines has used since March, when very few activities were being offered.
- **Approach B** - Residents are all grouped into one of two categories based upon their travel within a certain period of time (such as 14 days).
 - a. Group 1 includes those residents who have remained on campus.
 - b. Group 2 includes those who have left campus.
 - c. In Approach B, as compared to Approach A, residents in both Group 1 and Group 2 participate in activities such as waited table-service dining and fitness classes, but each resident would participate only with their respective group. For example, a swimming activity would be offered in the morning just for residents in Group 1 and in the afternoon just for residents in Group 2.
 - d. As shared in a recent UPDATE, The Pines is transitioning to Approach B. One variation to Approach B might include a Group 3, with more stringent restrictions on those residents who traveled away from The Pines overnight, with a greater risk of exposure to COVID-19.

- **Approach C** - In this approach, residents leaving campus regardless of the timeframe will not be separated in group activities from those who have remained on campus (with the possible exception of overnight travel).
 - a. With Approach C residents are comingled in activities so that residents leaving campus may participate in the same activities as residents who have not left campus.
 - b. At the request of the Executive Committee of the Residents' Association, The Pines is exploring the possibility of a future transition to a variation of Approach C.
 - c. Prior to such a transition, if any, management plans to conduct a comprehensive resident survey to obtain feedback from all residents, in addition to working with the Healthcare Services Committee of the Residents' Association.

In considering a change in The Pines' approach, management (in consultation with other medical and public health professionals) reviewed certain data, including COVID-19 metrics for Mecklenburg County (trends in number of new cases, positivity rate, hospitalizations and number of deaths), the presence of COVID-19 cases in all levels of care at The Pines, and IL resident travel off-campus. With respect to the latter, during the 14 days ending August 17, 2020, 60% of The Pines' IL households did not leave campus. In addition, during the 49-day period from July 1, 2020 to August 17, 2020, 58% of IL households left campus two or less times (33% of IL households did not leave camps during this same period). Approach B becomes less feasible if the number of IL households leaving The Pines increases, although it is not currently clear just where Approach B ceases to be feasible.

One benefit of Approach B is that, while not a perfect quarantine method, it may reduce COVID-19 exposure risk for residents who seldom leave campus by giving them the opportunity to limit association, if they wish, with residents who do leave campus. At the same time, residents who do leave campus can enjoy most of services that The Pines has reopened since the onset of COVID-19.

While there are some limitations placed upon The Pines by the State of North Carolina with respect to operations in Independent Living, such as lower maximum occupancy limits in dining spaces, the limitations imposed by the State of North Carolina for nursing/assisted living facilities are more restrictive. For example, no communal dining, group activities or visitation (outdoors or indoors) is permitted for residents in nursing/assisted living facilities (except visitation is allowed in very limited circumstances such as end of life or if there is a special care need supported by a doctor's order).

While restrictions on visitation imposed on nursing/assisted living are frustrating for residents, family members and staff, and may lead to other issues (including depression), it is important to remember that the purpose of the regulations is to help prevent outbreaks that result in serious illness or deaths, such as the approximately 20 nursing home residents who passed away at Autumn Care in Cornelius in spring of 2020. We are working to find ways to minimize

the vexation residents and their families may feel related to these mandated restrictions, such as with creative use of FaceTime. We are quite pleased to report that the State of North Carolina is easing outdoor visitation restrictions for nursing/assisted living facilities, effective September 4, 2020, subject to certain limitations. For example, nursing/assisted living residents may participate in outdoor visitation, for reasons other than end of life or special care needs documented by a doctor's order, provided The Pines is not listed on the NC DHHS COVID website as having an ongoing outbreak.

The Pines will continue to modify its safety policies to reflect the current realities presented by COVID-19, state regulations, and guidance from medical experts. We deeply appreciate working in tandem with everyone in the community to find creative ways for life at The Pines to be fulfilling and fun, while also providing a safe environment for all in our community.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Reminder: Art Survey

Thank you to the 90 residents whose responses we received to the Art Survey which was electronically distributed last week. This survey offers an opportunity for residents to provide The Pines' interior designers with feedback regarding proposed pieces of artwork.

We welcome your participation, which will help with the final selection of artwork to be displayed in the renovated and expanded areas on campus.

The deadline for responses is September 4th.

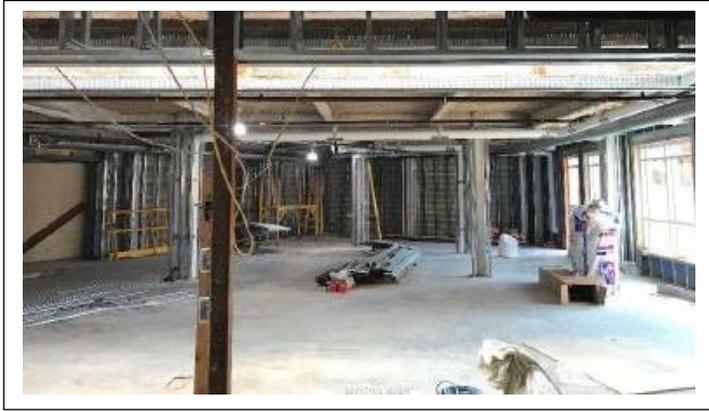


Construction Corner

The most recent Rodgers Builders' report about our renovation and expansion project can be found here: [Rodgers](#). Below are some highlights of the report:

- **New Nursing Wing:** Casework, flooring and door installation continue.
- **Villa 1:** Covered parking as well as casework and siding installation continue.
- **Villa 2:** Covered parking and painting continues; elevator and trim to be installed.
- **New Davidson Room:** Continued hanging of drywall.
- **Fitness Center:** Skylight installation continues; ductwork and brick washing.
- **Sitework:** Grading, formwork, sleeves and placing concrete for sidewalks and stairs near new Nursing Wing; grading and placing of curb near Villa 1.

Photos (clockwise from left): Expanded Fitness Room, exterior sidewalk along the New Nursing Wing, Villa #1, new Davidson Room, New Nursing Wing light fixture.



Closing Images

The following are images of dahlias in a staff member's garden. Such a vibrant burst of color!

