



## **COVID-19 UPDATE**

***For Residents, Family Members, and Staff***  
**Friday, May 29, 2020**

We have elected to round out this week's COVID-19 *UPDATES* by answering questions we received from residents and families about diagnostic testing protocols.

Testing information first: The protocol we follow for our Health Center residents and staff (including non-nursing staff who work in Health Center areas) is separate and distinct from the protocol for Independent Living. As a result of the initial confirmed cases of COVID-19 among Nursing Wing residents and staff, and the close contact which routinely occurs in both the Nursing and Assisted Living wings, all residents and staff in those areas are now part of "surveillance" testing. This is the currently recommended testing protocol for licensed nursing facilities of both the CDC and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. Following this protocol allows us to make important, actionable decisions regarding care, treatment and isolation, including possible transfer to the specialized unit for COVID-19 at Huntersville Oaks, or to a local hospital.

Diagnostic testing for Independent Living residents is handled quite differently. As an organization, The Pines cannot prescribe a lab test for you. And generally, without the presence of COVID-19 symptoms, most physicians are reluctant to order tests. Independent Living residents do have the same testing options that are available to the general public, with the added priority of being in a group identified as high-risk (older adults). While surveillance testing of IL residents and non-healthcare staff is not currently part of public health protocols, we encourage any Independent Living resident to contact their primary care provider if they believe they should be tested. Residents are always welcome to contact the Wellness Clinic (ext. 1467) or Health Center staff (ext. 1463) for assistance or for further clinical guidance.

Included in questions received is whether testing could shorten the 14-day period of quarantine for any IL resident who leaves The Pines campus and later returns. Since testing gives just a snapshot of a moment in time, and because of the virus's incubation period, a test result not detecting the presence of the virus may not reflect an early stage infection, and therefore give a "false negative" result. Recent research shows that false negative results can occur in 1 of 5 tests – sometimes even more. Given the way testing is currently ordered and

administered, it is neither realistic nor desirable to conduct testing of all Independent Living residents at a given time or interval of time. Quite simply, there is no existing testing approach that could justify shortening the 14-day quarantine for a resident returning to The Pines campus.

**Right now, we firmly believe that the best course of action for The Pines community is for each of us to assume that anyone we encounter could transmit the coronavirus to us, and to practice all the essential protective measures that can assure our personal safety.** If we all do this consistently well, our current situation could be a temporary one - - and we will remain safe and healthy as we continue to navigate this surreal storm.

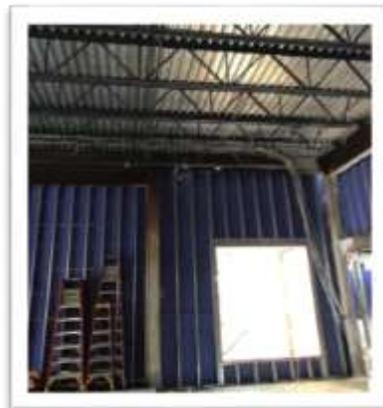
### **Helpful Information**

#### **Reminder: Travel for Medical Appointment**

Residents are still strongly encouraged to use The Pines' medical transportation service to travel to appointments. Residents can travel on their own to these appointments, but are requested to please not stop at other businesses or locations and also to please not travel with a Pines neighbor.

#### **Construction Corner**

Rodgers Builders continues work in the Marketplace Dining Room, Davidson Room and new Fitness Room. (See photos below from left). The Health Center is also progressing well, with handsome exterior brick work and interior drywall and priming.



## Campus Visitors

Thank you, Sherman Kahn and Nancy Waite-Kahn, for sharing the photo (left) of a curious squirrel on our campus (“How indeed did this visitor get in?”). A staff member sent along an updated photo (right) of the mourning dove who made herself at home on a resident balcony. Look carefully for the two little ones with momma in the nest.



## Closing Image



We leave you with this bright and beautiful image of a red canna lily, soaked by recent rain, near our main entrance. Best wishes for a lovely weekend.