



## **COVID-19 UPDATE**

***For Residents, Family Members, and Staff***  
**Wednesday, February 3, 2021**

### **Cumulative Active COVID-19 Cases at The Pines (2/3/2021) \***

Health Center Residents: 7 Cases

Health Center Staff: 2 Cases

Independent Living Resident: 1 Case

*\* Numbers may change from those listed in a previous Update for reasons that include: the result of an individual's second test was 'non-detect' or the individual has recovered and met return-to-work requirements. The Pines is following CDC guidelines as to what represents an active COVID-19 case.*

### ***A Note from Heather McKee, Interim President/CEO and Executive Director***

February is filled with great promise for our community, especially with the arrival of the second dose of the Moderna vaccine in the coming weeks. Yet we also remain deeply concerned about fellow residents and staff recovering from COVID-19 as well as the ongoing uncertainty regarding the various mutations of this virus.

In my [Monday Minutes video](#) earlier this week, I shared a quote by Rev. Jacqui Lewis, who provides helpful perspective during these days filled with both optimism and challenge. She eloquently notes, *“Hope not a static concept; sometimes we are full of hope and we rise up in confidence, and sometimes hope eludes us. And when it eludes us, we're just being human. We don't have to have a Herculean hope. Hope and doubt, hope and despair, hope and uncertainty, these are parts of the cycle of being a human being”*.

Residents have recently asked, “What is The Pines doing in response to the current outbreak of COVID-19 in our Health Center?” While we are grateful that this outbreak appears to be subsiding, The Pines continues to explore ways it can further diminish the spread of the virus. As you know, the management team has been carefully following many State required

infection control practices, including the frequent COVID-19 testing of Health Center residents and staff. (Currently, testing is conducted twice a week due to the outbreak at The Pines and Mecklenburg County's high COVID-19 positivity rate.)

Additionally, The Pines has incorporated various safety features (not required but prudent) to help mitigate the spread of the virus. For example, The Pines created special quarantine cottages for HC residents returning from a hospital stay, and in January of this year, a dedicated and separate wing for HC residents who tested positive for this virus.

Most recently, The Pines implemented several additional safety features:

- *Indoor Air Treatment Upgrade:* The Pines has completed installing bi-polar ionization air treatment systems throughout the Schramm Health Center, including in the COVID-19 dedicated wing. This technology will also be incorporated in all the newly created or renovated spaces in the Jetton Community Center. Bi-polar ionization reduces the concentration of active pathogens, such as coronavirus and influenza, thereby reducing the risk of transmission. Because the ions cause pathogens and other particles that are suspended in the air to become either positively or negatively charged, they are then attracted to each other, effectively increasing their mass and size. As the particles stick together, they create a larger surface and mass that then either falls to the floor or is more easily caught by filters in the air circulating system because of the larger particle sizes.
- *Additional Cleaning of the Schramm Health Center:* supplemental cleaning is now provided by an outside service. In addition to disinfecting high frequency touched surfaces in the common areas, the firm also cleans the rooms of residents who have been moved to the dedicated COVID-19 wing.
- *Documented Training Refresher:* Health Center staff have been provided a retraining/reminder of the proper safety procedures and are required to abide by these safety practices by signing a document listing these procedures. This training includes a detailed review of how to wear, use and dispose of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). For example, when putting on a KN95 or N95 mask, "it should be fitted to the nose with both hands, not bent or tented. Do not pinch the nosepiece with one hand." Other examples include "Gloves should cover the cuff (wrist) of the gown," and "Ensure glove removal does not cause additional contamination of hands."
- *Guiding Visitors Regarding PPE:* Staff also guide residents who are visiting loved ones in the COVID-19 wing regarding the proper ways to put on and off PPE.
- *Recognition of Proper Safety Adherence:* Health Center staff who demonstrate exemplary adherence to safety practices are provided public recognition and expressions of gratitude.
- *Reminder Signage:* a significant number of areas within the Health Center have added information and reminders for staff regarding safety practices.

We will continue to consult with medical experts to implement effective interventions and policies to further help mitigate the possible spread of the virus in the Health Center. At the same time, we continue to encourage every member of The Pines community to practice COVID-19 safety precautions, to include wearing masks, frequent hand washing, and socially distancing.

### **Closing Image**

John Griffith shared this image of a watercolor he recently painted, entitled “Quay.” He writes, *“Since the pier posts and colors were so complicated to create, I referred to the painting of it as my COVID era therapy! It comes from a photograph that one of our friends took.”* Thank you, John, for this inspiring artwork.

