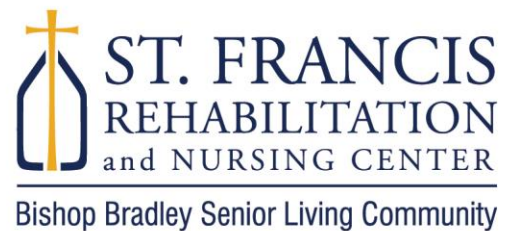


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December 9, 2021

Dear Residents, Tenants, Family Members and Employees,

I want to give you an update on things that are happening at St. Francis. The results of our recent PCR tests have come back and we have had no new positive tests. This was the testing that we completed this past Sunday and Monday, December 6 and 7. We are now doing our second round of testing and should have all of these results by Monday, December 13. Depending on the results of these tests, this will determine if we will be able to open up to admissions, communal dining and communal activities. Overall, our residents are doing well and we only have one left on quarantine. We have had a total of 8 staff members test positive. They have all returned to work at this point after their 10 day quarantine. We are doing our best to keep you all informed as to how your loved one is doing. Please note that those residents who receive the monoclonal antibodies will need to wait 90 days to receive their booster vaccine. We will schedule a booster clinic at that time.

**We would like to invite you to a zoom meeting on Tuesday, December 14 at 6:00 pm. Dr. Ephrem will be on the call to give everyone an update. Please see the zoom invitation in the e-mail.**

Please see the attached guidance on visitation of your loved one. At this time because we are in a COVID-19 outbreak we are discouraging visits for your own safety, but visits may occur at any time per the new CMS guidelines. You may also take your loved one out at any time as well. It is our responsibility to share with you and educate you on the risks of doing this.

Many family members drop things off at the door for their loved ones. We ask that you please ring the door bell and give it to a staff member and not leave it on the bench in the vestibule. We want to make sure that your loved one receives what you have dropped off and that it does not go missing.

The positivity rate of COVID-19 is going up in our county. Belknap County is considered in substantial transmission. I would like to encourage you all to wear masks when you are in a public setting. This applies even to vaccinated people due to the different variants that are being discovered.

While we know this is an incredibly challenging time for you and your family, please be assured that we remain committed to the care and support of your loved one here at St. Francis. Their safety, health and well-being remain our firm commitment.

We will continue to keep you updated as time goes on.

God bless,

Brenda Buttrick RN, LNHA  
Administrator

## **CATHOLIC CHARITIES NEW HAMPSHIRE VISITOR EDUCATION**

We are pleased to be able to liberalize visitation at this time. The pandemic has taken its toll and everyone is craving some normalcy again. We want your visits to be meaningful and support our residents' physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being. However, as much as we all wish the pandemic was over, it is not. In fact, numbers have risen exponentially again, nursing homes are experiencing outbreaks, and community transmission remains high. Therefore, we need to implement safety measures to protect you while you are visiting, protect the residents in our care and protect our employees who have worked tirelessly throughout the course of this pandemic. The Core Principles of Infection Control must be followed at all times during your visit.

### **Core Principles of Infection Control**

- Please practice good hand hygiene at all times while in the nursing home. Alcohol gel will be provided as you enter the facility and there are alcohol based hand rub stations throughout the facility for your use. Please ask the staff if you are unsure where to find alcohol gel.
- A medical grade mask will be provided to you. Please make sure you wear this mask at all times during your visit, with the exceptions as noted below.
- Physical distancing of 6 feet is also strongly encouraged, with exceptions listed below.
- You will receive education and a copy of this education at the time of your visit and will be asked to sign acknowledgement that you have received education about visit expectations and infection control.
- You may also refer to signage posted throughout the facility and ask staff for clarification as necessary.
- Visits do not need to be scheduled in advance. We would appreciate calling ahead for visits after hours or at peak times such as during mealtimes, so we can ensure that there are not too many visitors in the same area for everyone's safety.
- You will be asked if you have been vaccinated. You are not required to answer this but it is helpful to us to know this information for the safety of the community. We strongly advise all our visitors to be vaccinated for the protection of all our residents, visitors and employees. If you have any questions about vaccination, or would like any additional information we would be happy to help you with this. Please ask to see our Director of Nursing, Assistant Director of Nursing or Infection Preventionist for vaccination information.
- If you decline to disclose your vaccination status we must assume you are not vaccinated and you will need to keep your mask on at all times during your visit, even when you are alone with your loved one in their room.
- You will be offered COVID testing. For your convenience we have rapid COVID testing available to all visitors at no cost to you. The test takes just a few minutes to process. It is not required that you be tested before your visit. It is optional.
- We no longer require screening before scheduling a visit as the visits no longer need to be scheduled in advance. When you arrive for a visit you and your party will be screened at that time. If anyone in your party displays does not meet the screening criteria their visit will be postponed until screening criteria are met.
- If anyone in your party is not able to understand visitation guidelines or infection control measures, that person must be accompanied by someone who can ensure that infection prevention measures will be maintained, or the nursing home reserves the right to monitor the visit.
- If anyone in your party refuses to adhere to the safety and infection control measures during the visit, that person may be asked to leave and future visits may be restricted.
- You will be given a fresh medical grade mask to wear during your visit. Additional PPE will be available (gowns, gloves, eye protection) and offered based on community transmission or the presence of COVID-19 cases in the nursing home. You may also request any of these items when you arrive for your visit.

### CATHOLIC CHARITIES NEW HAMPSHIRE VISITOR EDUCATION

- The PPE provided to you should be worn and maintained throughout the entire visit
- Visits may occur in residents' rooms or in visiting areas. The appropriate area will be discussed with you at the time of your visit and will depend on the number of visitors in any area.
- We ask that you not stop to chat with any other residents or family members while you are here. Please stay in the designated area with the resident you are here to see.
- You will need to wear the mask provided to you and physically distance during your visit at all times while you are in the facility during times of substantial or high community transmission, with the following exceptions:
  1. During times of moderate or low community transmission, if you, and the resident you are visiting are both vaccinated and you both understand the risk that even vaccinated individuals can develop and transmit COVID, you may remove your mask only while you are in the private visiting area, or in a private room. If you are visiting in a shared room, and the roommate is present you may not remove your mask. If you are visiting in a public area you may not remove your mask.
  2. During times of substantial or high community transmission please keep your mask on at all times unless you and the resident you are visiting are eating a meal together in the resident's private room or other private location. This may need to be arranged ahead of your visit. Please check with the nursing home in advance if you wish to dine with your loved one.
  3. If your loved one is severely immunocompromised, you may not remove your mask and must maintain physical distancing. Please check with your nurse if you are uncertain of your loved one's medical risk.
  4. We understand how therapeutic it can be for our residents to have pet visits. We are a pet friendly organization. Pets are welcome as long as they are up to date on their shots and are contained. Dogs must be leashed or in a suitable carrier. Cats must be contained in a carrier. Please see our Life Enrichment Director or administration for additional pet visit guidelines.
- **Visiting is allowed, though not recommended, during a COVID outbreak, and/or if your loved one is on quarantine. If you are visiting a resident who is positive for COVID, or in quarantine the visit must occur in the resident room. The resident and visitors must wear medical facemasks at all times and any additional PPE you are asked to wear by the staff.**