

March 8, 2020

To Whom it May Concern,

This morning we received notice from The Vermont Department of Health that Vermont has their first presumptive positive case of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). As you may be aware, COVID-19 is especially concerning for our elderly population as well as those with chronic conditions such as diabetes, cancer, immunocompromised individuals and those with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Facilities, such as ours, have been strongly encouraged to develop policies and procedures meant to offer protection from unnecessary exposure to COVID-19. We have been in receipt of daily advisory alerts from Vermont Emergency Management and The Vermont Department of Health and we have been actively planning for the implications that this virus would pose to our facility, residents and staff. Upon receipt of the most recent alert, this morning, we feel it is time for us to take action in ensuring the safety of all residents and staff as the concern surrounding COVID-19 has increased.

We are hopeful that our residents and staff can remain safe during this time of uncertainty and we appreciate your support and understanding of our need to protect our vulnerable population. With that being said, effective March 9, 2020, the following measures will be implemented, at our facility, in response to COVID-19:

* Brownway is not accepting admissions until further notice – any residents, currently at a skilled facility for the purposes of rehabilitation, will be assessed on a case by case basis and will be denied readmission if they pose any risk or threat to the residents or staff onsite at Brownway Residence during the bed freeze.
* Brownway will have one designated LOCKED entrance to the facility for visitors to access to gain entrance to the facility to allow controlled access/exposure to residents and staff.
* Brownway will only allow visitors enter the facility that present no risk/low risk of exposure and have completed the questionnaire recommended by The Vermont Department of Health.
* All non-urgent or unnecessary medical appointments are being rescheduled for a later date.
* Any residents, who are symptomatic and have risk factors indicative of COVID-19, will be monitored by nursing in conjunction with The Vermont Department of Health.
* Any facility exposure to COVID-19, by staff, residents, visitors or vendors will be reported to all family members. Brownway Residence has policies and procedures drafted to ensure safety of all residents and staff should an exposure occur – these policies and procedures will be activated if necessary.

Attached, you will find several documents for your review. These attachments are meant to provide more detailed information about COVID-19, guide you in understanding the policies and procedures being implemented this week and educate you on the measures you can take to support our residents and staff in remaining safe from exposure.

We will be cuing all residents, staff and visitors to engage in excellent hand hygiene practices while inside the facility as we know that hand hygiene is the most important step taken to limit the spread of germs or infection. At present, COVID-19 does not have any treatment available other than supportive care and hydration. Our best defense, right now, is avoiding exposure and we are confident that we can do that with your support.

If you, yourself, have been exposed to COVID-19 and/or have concerns about a potential exposure involving a current resident at our facility, it must be reported immediately so that we can take the appropriate measures to prevent further exposure. Should you have any questions or concerns or need to report information, you are encouraged to reach out to:

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Be well,

Morgan A. Ouellette, LPN

Executive Director

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