



BAYVIEW

A POINT OF VIEW

May 1, 2020

COVID-19 Updates

As information about COVID-19 continues to evolve, one issue continues to remain at the forefront of national concern: Testing.

Our Executive Team attributes much of our success to stave off COVID-19 by “staying ahead of the curve” and implementing policy and procedures ahead of projected recommendations by state agencies. For example, Bayview implemented what is now called “Universal Source Control” at least four (4) weeks prior to recommendations and now requirements from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Department of Health (DOH), and the Centers for Medicare Services (CMS). Universal Source Control is the consistent and constant use of face masks for all employees. We have further strengthened Universal Source Control in the facility by providing and requiring the consistent use of face masks to all Bayview residents while outside of their apartment. We continue to fine tune our efforts as evidenced by new elevator occupancy restrictions and the floor common area restrictions.

As the media continues to villainize nursing homes throughout the United States as the “Petri dishes of COVID-19”, there is mounting pressure for COVID-19 testing of all nursing homes across the country. Bayview has decided to once again partner with the King County Department of Health and conduct COVID-19 testing for the residents of the Health Center prior to any mandates, recommendations, or requirements. This decision is designed to identify if the most vulnerable residents in our facility have the COVID-19 virus present in their bodies BEFORE the onset of acute symptoms. With this information, the facility could implement strict contingency plans to avoid a localized outbreak and ultimately, death. The idea is to stay ahead of the virus instead of chasing it.

This decision was not made lightly. There are many “pros” and “cons” to testing. For example, one problem is we will not be able to test ALL residents. This testing is only for the residents of the Skilled Nursing Facility portion of Bayview. Residents from independent, and assisted living, memory care and child development are not included in this event. Another problem is this testing is just a “snap-shot” in time. Testing today does not mean someone is immune to contracting the virus tomorrow. Problems also remain in the testing itself. COVID-19 tests are still in development, and in the infancy of use. There is not enough data to show the true accuracy or error rates of the tests.

Ultimately, the paramount benefit of testing is: testing may save lives. For this reason alone, the Executive Team feels testing is “the right thing to do”. We anticipate skilled nursing resident testing to begin as early as next Tuesday, May 5th, 2020. Results of testing should be known by Friday, May 8th, 2020.

This is the challenge of the decade for Bayview. We are standing toe-to-toe with the devil and taking this threat to task, head-on. We will not fear test results. Through all of it, we will rise to the occasion, be measured and calculated in our process, and we will be stronger than ever in the end. Thank you for your continued support and prayers! Be safe and stay healthy.

Pg. 1 of 2





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Trending questions of the week:

“Will we be notified if there is a positive case of COVID-19?”

The short answer: Yes. The long answer is Bayview is committed to transparency of all our COVID-19 efforts. The more communication, the better. If there is a positive case, we will inform Residents and Employees of the current situation, and what our plans will be moving forward. CMS has enacted new, mandated, notification requirements for residents of skilled nursing facilities. Much like many of the preemptive decisions made surrounding COVID-19 at Bayview, the Executive Team contends clear and transparent notification has always been the “right thing to do” and will continue this practice.

“Will employees be tested for COVID-19?”

The short answer: Not initially. The long answer requires a little more detail. As with the residents, only employees that work on the skilled nursing unit would be eligible for testing. The DOH has stated since skilled nursing employees have utilized Universal Source Control measures for over a month, (the constant use of face masks), employee testing will only occur if a resident on the skilled nursing unit tests positive for COVID-19. Skilled nursing employees will have the choice to participate in COVID-19 testing. There is no reprisal for employees that opt out of COVID-19 testing. In other words, they will be allowed to continue to work under the current guidelines and restrictions already in place even if the employee chooses not to participate in COVID-19 testing.

“Is it okay for residents to go into other resident’s apartments?”

The short answer: No. The long answer: The Governor issued a “Stay-at-Home” order. We are able to leave our home only for essential business such as mild exercise or to pick up something that can’t be delivered to us that is necessary to sustain your life. Even though Bayview is considered our home, Bayview is actually a “Senior Living Community”. Our individual apartment is actually our “home”. Utilizing universal source control (constant and consistent use of face masks) and strict adherence to proper infection prevention measures (such as hand hygiene) could reduce the risk of exposure, however, until the Governor removes the stay-at-home order for Senior Living Communities (the final phase of the governor’s plan, as outlined last week’s memo) we should refrain from entering other resident apartments. Non-essential business should be conducted by phone, or by video conferencing (via your phone or tablet) only until further notice.

Sincerely,

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