June 9, 2020

Dear residents, families and resident representatives of Forest Hills and Forest Side,

This week, I start my 4th week of employment at Forest Hills. If I were to sum it up, I would say “The Hills are alive!” There is a positive energy in our home.

**TESTING**

What a difference a day makes. As you will see in the Administrator’s Weekly Update written this morning and attached, this morning we had 2 residents in our Forest Hills skilled care that tested positive for Covid-19. Today, we were the first senior living community in DC to experience the new, Rapid Response Team from the DC Public Health Lab. The Rapid Response Team consisted of 23 members that came to collect swab samples from our residents receiving skilled services. The initial results this afternoon show that we currently have a total of 6 asymptomatic, positive residents, and 1 symptomatic resident in skilled care, all on our second floor. Our team immediately mobilized to put changes into place. To improve our infection control, meals on the second floor in skilled care will be served in disposable containers, safe visits have been stopped in the meantime, and continued training on hand hygiene and proper PPE usage continues. We have sufficient PPE for our team. We continue, as we have been, cleaning high-contact areas every two hours. We are doing our contact tracing and cohorting Covid-negative residents with each other as well as Covid-positive residents with each other to isolate the virus. When we know better, we can do better to protect everyone.

In our Forest Hills assisted living community, we were able to collect swab samples from all our residents today. Results will be returned later this week. Previous testing in May revealed 2 asymptomatic residents. Safe visits are being put on hold for now until we are sure that there is not spread of the virus.

**Forest Side memory care** continues to remain 100% Covid-free. We will conduct full round-two testing this Thursday.

By the end of this week, we will have completed 2 full rounds of whole-house resident testing. It is through educating, testing, tracing, isolating, and retesting that we will keep our residents safe.

We are also testing all our employees for a second round utilizing the DC Public Health Lab. To date, we have 2 staff who are positive and self-isolating, and 7 staff recovered from Covid-19.

There have been no resident or employee deaths in our community. We are very blessed and thankful for the attentions of our team on delivering good care.
We will be publishing data related to Covid-19 on our website for the most up to date numbers starting this week. Check there for updates.

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

Between Covid-19, civil and global affairs, presentational elections, and more, these are unprecedented times. Citizens of the District of Columbia, the Nation, and the world have taken note of and/or participated in our civil rights discourse. It deeply saddens us at Forest Hills, an Inclusive Senior Living community, when we see our fellow human suffer. While we do not know everything, we do know that our team comes to work each day energized to “do the right thing for our residents the first time”, as our Director Of Nursing (DON), Janice Johnson is fond of saying. Janice may be new in her current position, yet she has been with Forest Hills for 4 years, and she is a veteran DON.

The World Health Organization defines health as physical, mental and social wellbeing. To help our residents and our staff balance mental wellness during these stressful times and help foster stillness in the mind, we are planning to purchase yoga materials to start yoga and mindfulness classes. Compassion for the self and compassion for others is a path to calm.

In anticipation of new Assisted Living regulations that require an Assisted Living Administrator, we have named Samantha Taylor our new Director of Assisted Living. Samantha, a licensed social worker by education, has years of previous, successful experience as a Director of Assisted Living at another DC community.

While we have been on national and DC mandated lockdown in senior living to protect our residents, we have been working to spruce up the gardens in anticipation of future visits when we are open again to the public. Last weekend, 6 of our department heads helped transplant hostas and peonies. We continue to host Facetime and Skype virtual visits in the meantime. We await official word from both the CDC and DC department of health as to when we may invite families, friends, non-urgent care practitioners and other visitors again. Current indications are that healthcare entities will be included in Phase 3 of Reopen DC.

We will be increasing our postings to Facebook so you can see what is happening at Forest Hills of DC. Follow us!

WAY AHEAD

There is a saying, “When the wind will not serve, take to the oars.” Necessity is the motherhood of invention. Covid-19 has forced us to relook at how we all pass our days in our home, in our community, and in our world. The waking up of this part of our collective brain has invited us to relook at how we care for those we serve at Forest Hills and Forest Side. We are excited for what is to come.

Be well. I hope to meet you all soon.

Tina Sandri, MHSA, LNHA, QCP

CEO