

# Riverside Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing

## Communication Policy during COVID-19

### Policy:

During this COVID-19 pandemic, it is Riverside Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing policy to ensure that our residents, staff, family members and general public remain up to date with pertinent information regarding Covid-19 and our facility. This facility will also be in routine communication with local and state officials as deemed necessary.

### Purpose:

To follow executive order 202.18 dated April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and to keep families informed of the facility status.

### Procedure/Implementation:

The entry doors to our facility have signs to notify public of our current procedures and information regarding COVID 19 and our facility.

Family members/resident representatives will be kept up to date with all new information via social media/Facebook, USPS mailing and phone calls. Free electronic means of communication are available daily from the activities/social services department.

Residents are updated via meetings (resident council when in session), letters/memos, social media/Facebook and in-person visits. All in house residents will receive verbal or written notification within 24 hours provided by the social worker. Notification will be documented in the record.

Family members and guardians of residents infected with a pandemic infectious disease are updated at least once per day by the nursing department.

All residents and family members are updated on the number of deaths and number of infections weekly.

Staff is updated through emails, texts, phone calls, memos/letters, meetings, social media/Facebook and in-person visits.

When a suspected Covid-19 case is identified at Riverside Center, the NYS DOH and county epidemiologist will be notified. This will also be the case for any positive Covid-19 cases within the building.

Rensselaer County Office of Emergency Management is also notified routinely for needed PPE purposes and emergency planning.

Facility reports daily to the NYSDOH via HERDs survey.

It is the duty of the Administrator, and ADON/IP to notify and complete the aforementioned in conjunction with the DON and IDT.

Please see the ICS for successor/2<sup>nd</sup> in command information if deemed necessary.

Notification must be and will be made to all families (or Next of Kin) within 24 hours for:

- Residents tests positive for COVID 19
- Resident suffers a COVID 19 related death
- Staff tests positive for COVID 19

Best Practices and Ways to Keep Residents and Families Engaged During the COVID-19 Pandemic  
Develop a face-to-face video call program

Develop a family call program where activities or social work staff call families regularly with clinical updates, depending on the resident's condition

Establish an ambassador program that makes support staff available to answer phones and connect family members to nursing staff

Provide daily updates from the leadership of the facility on the facility's web page

Modify the facility's web page to include COVID-19 information and communication resources

Establish a bereavement support group for families of deceased residents

Provide written communication via email and US Mail with regular updates surrounding the facility's COVID-19 response plan

Arrange through-window calls or visits

Invite families to attend care plan meetings via telephone

Establish a pen pal program with the outside community

Continue to hold resident council meetings by modifying how they are conducted to maintain social distancing

Direct social work staff to speak with each unit daily to identify any COVID-19 response issues with either residents or staff

Maintain regular administrator rounds and post regular updates from the administrator using the facility's social media outlets.

Conduct phone conferences featuring the facility Medical Director or other key staff to provide information on COVID-19 and to answer questions from families

Increase activity staffing hours for more in-room activities

## Additional Ideas to Connect Families and Adult Care Facility and Nursing Home Residents During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Ask families to send care packages that include a note and a photo of sender to be used as a memory prompt

Ask families to send video messages that can be replayed.

Have families load an electronic picture frame (or other device) with family photos for a loved one who cannot receive visitors

Create a virtual adopt-a-grandparent program where community members can virtually “adopt” a resident to either write letters, speak on the phone, or have virtual visits if the facility is able to coordinate

Partner with a local educational institution to ask kids and families at home to make greeting cards for residents

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Administrator

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DON

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Medical Director

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ADON/IP