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**Sycamore Living at East Hanover**

Department: Nursing

Effective Date: 12-31-2021

Revision Date: 9-27-2022

**CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) PREVENTION & CONTROL:**

**VISITATION PROTOCOL**

**PURPOSE:**

The facility is implementing all reasonable measures to protect the health and safety of the residents and staff during the current outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The facilities will permit both outdoor and indoor visitation for residents in accordance with CMS QSO-20-39-NH: Nursing Home Visitation – COVID-19, NJ DOH Executive Directive (E.D.) 20-026: Directive for Resumption of Services in all Long-Term Care Facilities, and Executive Directive 21-001 (REVISED): Visitation Protocols Supplementing E.D. 20-026.

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:**

The facility will submit all required attestations on facility letterhead with required information to designated NJ DOH emails and will proceed as instructed in E.D. 20-026 depending on the facility’s current phase of resumption of services.

**PROCEDURE:**

**CORE PRINCIPLES OF COVID-19 INFECTION PREVENTION**

1. All visitors are screened by the facility for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g., temperature checks, questions about and observations of signs or symptoms), and denial of entry of those with signs or symptoms or those who have had close contact with someone with COVID-19 infection in the prior 14 days (regardless of the vaccination status).
2. Visitors are recommended to defer non-urgent in-person visits if the following are applicable:
   1. Positive viral test for COVID-19,
   2. Presents with symptoms of COVID-19,
   3. Had close contact/exposure to someone with COVID-19
3. Hand hygiene (use of alcohol-based hand rub is preferred).
4. Visitors are encouraged to wear a facemask in all areas of the facility, but can be removed while in designated area for visitation with the resident. If visitation occurs in the resident’s room and a roommate is present, use of facemask is to be encouraged.
5. Visitors are required to wear a facemask in all areas of the facility only in or during an outbreak.
6. Regardless of the community transmission level, residents and their visitors when alone in the resident’s room or in a designated visitation area, may choose not to wear face coverings or masks and may choose to have close contact (including touch). Residents (or their representative) and their visitors should be advised of the risks of physical contact prior to the visit.
7. Instructional signage will be placed throughout the facility and proper visitor education on COVID19 signs and symptoms, infection control precautions, other applicable facility practices (e.g., use of face covering or mask, specified entries, exits and routes to designated areas, hand hygiene) will be provided whenever possible.
8. Priority cleaning and disinfecting of high-frequency touched surfaces in the facility and designated visitation areas after each visit will be done frequently.
9. Staff will follow required use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as indicated in current facility protocol per the facility’s CDC county community transmission level.
10. The facility will effectively cohort residents as indicated in current facility protocol
11. Staff and resident testing for COVID-19 will be conducted as indicated in current facility protocol.

**OUTDOOR VISITATION**

The facility will maximize accessible and safe outdoor space for visitation whenever practicable. All appropriate infection control and prevention practices should be followed.

**INDOOR VISITATION**

1. Visitors will always be screened prior to being allowed access into the facility.
2. Testing is not required but as it is strongly recommended, visitors will have the option of undergoing COVID-19 rapid testing at the facility.
3. Upon screening, facilities must prohibit visitation for those who meet one or more of the following criteria:
   1. Exhibit signs or symptoms of COVID-19.
   2. Had contact with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 within the last 14 days.
   3. Recently diagnosed with COVID-19 and has not met criteria for discontinuation of isolation per guidance issued by NJ DOH and CDC.
4. Indoor visitation will be allowed AT ALL TIMES and FOR ALL RESIDENTS.
   1. Frequency and length of visit CANNOT be limited
   2. Number of visitors CANNOT be limited
   3. No appointments necessary
5. Visits should still be conducted in a manner that adheres to core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention and does not increase risk to other residents.

**OTHER VISITATION CONSIDERATIONS**

1. Visitors must read and sign an Informed Consent documenting exposure risks and must agree to listed guidelines prior to visitation.
2. If a roommate is present during the visit, it is safest for the visitor to wear a face covering or mask, and should be encouraged.
3. Residents on quarantine or transmission based precautions may receive visits in the resident’s room. Resident must wear a well-fitting mask as tolerated. Visitors must be aware of potential risk of visiting. Facility may offer appropriate PPE, however, not required.
4. During an outbreak investigation, visitation is permitted. Visitors must be aware of potential risk and mask must worn throughout the visit.
5. Visitors must remain in their assigned areas for the duration of their visits. No roaming throughout the facility will be allowed.
6. Visitors must engage in hand hygiene and physical distancing from staff and other residents while in the facility.
7. The facility may stop any visit if it is believed that the visit is not in the best interest of the resident or facility.
8. The resident continues to have the Right to Restrict Visitation as outlined in the Residents Bill of Rights.
9. Facilities may not restrict visitation without a reasonable clinical or safety cause.

\*\*\*Adapted from the following:

CMS QSO-20-39-NH Nursing Home Visitation – COVID-19 *REVISED*, September 23, 2022. <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-39-nh-revised.pdf>

NJ DOH Executive Directive 20-026 Directive for the Resumption of Services in all Long-Term Care Facilities, January 6, 2021. <https://www.nj.gov/health/legal/covid19/8-20_ExecutiveDirectiveNo20-026_LTCResumption_of_Svcs.pdf>

NJ DOH Executive Directive 21-001 (REVISED) Visitation Protocols Supplementing E.D. 20-026. May 12, 2021. <https://www.nj.gov/health/legal/covid19/3-22-21_ExecutiveDirectiveNo21-001_StandardsProtocolsVisitorsFacilityStaff.pdf>