

Dear Residents, Family Members and Friends,



This newsletter is being sent to all responsible parties listed as the primary contact for the residents of the Baldwin Care Center. Birch Haven Assisted Living is sending this newsletter to responsible parties. The Apartment Manager distributes copies to Birchwood Apartment tenants. Responsible parties can direct other family members to the Baldwin Care Center website at www.baldwincarecenter.com to read current and previous newsletters. If there is a topic you would like discussed in the newsletter, please contact me via email at elafavor@baldwincarecenter.com or by phone at 715-684-3231, Ext. 103.



In the last newsletter I discussed the vaccine mandate for health care workers in long term care and staff that work for other Medicare and Medicaid providers. The mandate requires that staff receive at least one dose of the vaccine by December 5th. Staff must be fully vaccinated by January 4th, 2022. The mandate includes both medical and religious exemptions. The requirements of the mandate indicate that the facility must: 1) Have a plan for vaccinating staff 2) Have a process or plan for providing exemptions and 3) Have a process or plan for tracking and documenting vaccinations. This process must be in place by December 6th. The facility does have a plan for staff vaccinations, has a process for requesting medical and religious exemptions and has a process for tracking and documenting staff vaccinations. We are currently working through the exemption process with staff. All staff must either have their first dose of the vaccine or have a religious or medical exemption in place to be able to continue to work after the 5th of December. The facility must ensure that we are minimizing the risk to residents from unvaccinated staff. The facility must provide accommodations for staff who were granted the exemption which might include additional testing or source control (masking) or physical distancing. The State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services surveyors will check for compliance with this new mandate when they are in the facility for their annual survey or during a complaint investigation. If a facility is out of compliance they will be issued a statement of deficiency and provided an opportunity to return to compliance. Penalties for noncompliance will be based on the level of noncompliance. They may range from fines to termination of the Medicare/Medicaid contract. The State of Wisconsin has indicated that they have not yet received what are called interpretive guidelines from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to determine specifically what penalties will be. At this point in the exemption process, I am uncertain as to how many staff will apply for medical or religious exemptions. I am also uncertain as to how many staff will not be working at the Baldwin Care Center after the 5th of December. But I can share with you that the loss of one employee is too many, especially during this time of staffing shortages. I am hopeful that this process does not create a critical staffing shortage. We may need to ask the assistance of family members if the situation does become critical. The State of Minnesota recently announced that they will be utilizing National Guard members to assist with the shortages in nursing facilities there.



Since the publication of the last newsletter the campus has had some additional cases of COVID-19 amongst staff and residents. The Whispering Pines Neighborhood of the Baldwin Care Center experienced additional cases. Five residents and three staff tested positive for COVID-19. Some staff and residents have already completed their quarantine period. The last positive resident case will complete their quarantine period on Sunday, November 28th. The facility has continued to test staff and residents with both rapid tests and PCR tests that are sent to a lab for processing. The facility will need to complete testing for up to two weeks after the last positive case to ensure that there are no new cases. Most of the residents and staff have not experienced serious effects. Some of the residents chose to have monoclonal antibody treatments with good results. There was a positive COVID case reported in the Birchwood Apartments also.



The visitation guidance for nursing facilities has recently changed allowing visitation for all residents at all times. There are no longer specific visiting hours. We are still required to screen visitors at the door. At this time visitors should wear a mask while visiting residents. It is recommended that residents mask also. The new guidance does allow us to recommend that family or friends not visit while a resident is actively experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, however they may do so if they choose. Visitors should be aware that there is a risk of transmission by visiting. We may not be aware if someone is positive

if they are not immediately exhibiting symptoms. All responsible parties and residents at the Baldwin Care Center were informed in person or by phone of the changes to the visitation guidance. If you have questions, please feel free to contact us prior to your visit.

As we celebrate this Thanksgiving holiday I hope that everyone is able to spend time with family and friends and remember the things that we are thankful for. Thanksgiving is a national holiday celebrated on various dates in various different countries. It began as a day of giving thanks for the blessing of the harvest. The first documented Thanksgiving actually occurred in 1619 when 38 English settlers landed in Virginia. They declared that the day should be perpetually kept holy as a day of Thanksgiving to Almighty God for their safe landing. The more familiar Thanksgiving precedent is traced to the Puritans and Pilgrims who emigrated from England in the 1620s. The Pilgrims celebrated with a tribe of Native Americans who helped them get through the previous winter by giving them food. The current date for Thanksgiving was designated as the last Thursday in November by President Franklin Roosevelt in 1939.



I am personally blessed to be able to serve the amazing residents of this campus and work with a dedicated group of caring staff. We are hoping that everyone's Thanksgiving is happy!

*Eileen LaFavor,
Administrator*



2021 Circle of Love



Just a friendly reminder that our 2021 Circle of Love Ceremony will be on Monday, December 13, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. Cookies and hot chocolate will be served outside. **Fantasy Corral will be visiting with some wonderful animals as well. If family members wish to attend, masks and social distancing are required!** The event will be held in the front parking lot so dress accordingly.

Deadline date is Friday, December 10, 2021. You may send your donation using form (*extra forms located in front lobby of BCC*) to: Baldwin Care Center, 650 Birch St., Baldwin, WI 54002. Please make checks payable to Baldwin Care Center. Thank you for your gifts and support.