

Facebook Covid-19 Update #31

December 11, 2020

Another week has flown by. This is our first week of weekly testing for both the staff and the residents. Coming in Monday was a bit nerve-wracking to say the least. I'm happy to report that all of the residents and all of the staff have tested negative. The swabs have been collected for this week and picked up by the lab. We have not had so much as a sniffle this week, and no POC testing has been done. I continue to count my blessings that we have remained safe and healthy.

Visitation remains on hold until further notice. The "Pause" in the state of Rhode Island has been extended until December 20, 2020 and then will slowly be scaled back as long as the numbers support it. There has been an ever so slight decline in the positivity rate but the spike from Thanksgiving has not fully had its impact felt. The hospitals are at 100 percent capacity and the field hospitals are being utilized. The staffing is spread thin, and calls for retired nurses, doctors, CNAs and all other medical professionals have been utilized. We are so lucky here that our staff is so dedicated to our residents; they truly are our extended family.

Vaccination is looming closer and closer and the Pfizer vaccine has been given approval from the FDA; Moderna is not far behind. Both of these require 2 inoculations and are the cold storage vaccines. Again, we have partnered with Pharmerica and Walgreens to provide this vaccine to the residents and the staff. This weekend, there will be more discussion by ACIP (Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices) and hopefully a final approval process. We will then rapidly be asking for permission to supply this vaccine to your loved ones. I will attach some information related to the vaccine for your education. Should you have further questions, there are sources cited at the end of this Q & A. If you still have questions, please call and we will try to either answer them or get the information from reliable sources and get back to you with an appropriate response. We will set up a process for you to sign permission for the vaccine, just as we did for the flu vaccine. Please understand, as this is a two-step process that we will need two permission slips signed. Depending upon the vaccine provided, the injections will either be twenty-one (21) days or twenty eight (28) days apart. There will be three clinics set-up- the first one for the first injection, the second one for the second injection and also for another round of first injections, and the third to give the second injection from those who received their first injection during the second clinic. The reason for staggering the injections is that there could be some localized soreness and "flu-like" symptoms. This is normal, just your body mounting its immune response, but as it could cause some of the staff to be unable to work the next day or two, we want to ensure we can care for your loved ones. We will also stagger the residents so that the staff can adequately care for them, should they exhibit any side effects. Please take the time to read through the information provided, and check out sites that are .edu, .org, or .gov as these are reliable sources.

On a much happier note, the holidays are coming alive here at Ballou. Tina and company have decorated the whole facility inside and out including all of the resident rooms. It is truly a festive site. The "Bombshell Betty's" along with some help from Mr. & Mrs. Claus dropped off some gifts for everyone, and Christmas cheer is being spread throughout the building. Christmas crafts have been done all week long and have brightened up doors and walls throughout the facility. I admit, I'm kind of jealous, and wish I could be crafting rather than working! As per usual, Tina has been posting pictures to the website and to Facebook, and the smiles are from ear to ear. I can't wait to see today's pictures.

This coming Monday will be Ugly Sweater Day, so be prepared for some wild pictures to follow. We will also be having a Christmas pajama day on Friday, again be prepared for some wild and fun-filled pictures. We enjoy having this chance to relax and “play” at work. This is much needed therapy for the staff and residents alike. Kudos to Tina for letting us have fun at work.

As always, wash your hands, wear a mask (please- up over your nose), social distance and keep your social circle small.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ruth A. Daly, RN,
Infection Preventionist