Dear ZHS Family and Friends,

We hope you are well and have been staying healthy physically, mentally, and emotionally during these unique times. Over the past few months, we have had three staff members test positive for COVID-19, and we have put residents on special precautions due to exposure to positive staff members. This has also triggered point prevalence testing at the facility, meaning we test all residents and staff weekly until we have two consecutive weeks of all negative tests. We just finished our most recent cycle of testing the week of October 19th, with all tests coming back negative! This means we move to surveillance testing. Frequency is determined by county positivity rates. Currently that means we will test staff only on a monthly basis unless county positivity rates change or we have an “outbreak” at the nursing home (positive resident or staff member who worked in the 48 hours prior to onset of symptoms). We are so thankful that our residents have remained COVID-free thus far!

With winter coming and changes in guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health, we will be starting indoor visits with residents. We will be following strict precautions to keep our residents as healthy as possible while allowing residents to see family and friends. We hope this will be a positive experience for all! Please see Lacey’s article for more information. We will also be starting the essential caregiver program. Rachel F. has more details later on in the newsletter.

In the midst of this pandemic we have had some changes in leadership staffing. Jonathan Triggs, Director of Nursing, stepped out of that role at the beginning of October and we currently have Interim Director of Nursing Irmande Hanson helping manage our nursing department. It has been wonderful to have her here. We had some other changes in management as well, with Sharon Muller retiring and Linda Bergman moving on to another job. Sharon is currently helping us out part-time while we get new nurse managers in place, as well our RN Quality Consultant Kim Holland working full-time at ZHS for the interim, fulfilling nurse manager duties. Cassie Alms, one of our current staff RNs, has also stepped into a Resident Care Coordinator role and is assisting in managing resident care. All of these ladies truly care about making sure our residents’ needs are met and I am grateful to have them here! Starting in November, Rachel Spillman, RN, will be joining us as our Assistant Director of Nursing, and Heidi Granstrom, RN, as a Clinical Manager. We are very excited to have them join our team!!!

I want to take a moment to recognize the hard work all of the staff have been doing at the Care Center and Assisted Living. Work in long term care is challenging without the added burden of masks, goggles/face shields, extra precautions when residents are on quarantine, etc. Our team has really worked hard to continue caring for our residents’ needs, providing them wholesome nutritious meals, clean rooms to live in, clean clothes to wear, assistance with their daily needs, providing for the residents emotional needs, and hiring new staff to provide these cares. It truly takes every person we have here to care for our residents well and I am thankful to have these great people here to make sure the residents get the care they need.

Call to Action! Our staff would love to hear some encouragement from you. The residents are the reason we all do our jobs here at ZHS, but a kind word from a family member or friend means so much to our team. I would love to post notes from families and friends in the break room for staff to read and enjoy. If you would be willing, could you send a note to our team for me to share? Please address it to me, and I will ensure our staff hear your kind word.

Thank you for entrusting the care of your resident to us, and I wish you the happiest of holidays as they approach.

Sincerely,

Laura Erickson
Administrator
Greetings from the Maintenance department! It would seem winter snuck up on us early this year! We are busy transitioning the building from A/C to heat, So far so good! Plenty of things to do and projects to complete this winter so that when we are able to open up more to visitors we can have the building freshened up and looking sharp! Hope Everybody has a Blessed Thanksgiving! Tim & Todd

Social Services Department

As we continue to stay positive through this pandemic, I would like to thank all families and loved ones for your patience. We know how difficult it is for you and for your loved ones at ZHS during this time. Please know that we are monitoring for signs and symptoms of depression for all residents and will communicate with families as needed. If you have concerns regarding your loved one’s mental health, please reach out to us.

I am excited to announce that we have started the Essential Care Giver Program at Zumbrota Care Center! This program has been designed by the Minnesota Department of Health and follows Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) guidelines. The Essential Care Giver Program allows nursing care facilities to provide opportunities for non-employed care givers to provide care giving tasks for the resident that they have previously had a care giving relationship with, prior to visitor restrictions. Care may include meal time assistance, grooming, behavior management etc. These Essential Care Visits are NOT for visiting, but to PROVIDE CARE. We meet as a team each week to discuss/evaluate our current Essential Care Givers as well as determine appropriateness for proposed Essential Care Givers. If you have more specific questions about Essential Care Givers, please contact me by email or phone.

Care Conferences will continue to be via phone call. You will receive a phone call from the facility on the scheduled date and time. The phone number called will be the primary contact of the resident as listed in their file. If you would like another family member to be called, please let us know.

Please do not hesitate to reach out with questions or concerns,
Rachel FollansbeeDelong
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ZHS has a couple announcements in regards to the nursing management team. We would like to thank Sharon Muller for her years of service and wish her well on her retirement. We would also like to thank Linda Bergman and Jonathan Triggs for their service and wish them well on their new opportunities and endeavors. All three have decided to stay on as casual employees. In response to this, ZHS would like to welcome our new members of nurse management, Rachel Spillman the new Assistant Director of Nursing and Heidi Granstrom as the new nurse manager. Rachel will start full time November 4th. Rachel has 2 plus years of DON experience and 7 years of long term care experience. Heidi will start November 4th. Heidi has 30 plus RN experience and 6 plus years of long term care experience. We are excited to welcome the new leadership to ZHS. We are continuing our recruitment efforts for a new Director of Nursing. Please help Zumbrota Health Services in our continued efforts to recruit individuals that love to take care of the elderly. This can be done by sharing and liking Zumbrota Health Services Facebook posts. Otherwise, word of mouth is a great avenue in spreading the job opportunities at ZHS.

-Heather Ringelstetter, Human Resources Director
**Dietary Department**

We are happy to see that residents are able to dine outside of their rooms with safe six-feet of social distancing. It has been nice to see them be neighborly again and strike up conversations. We cannot wait to get everyone back to regular dining in the dining room but for the safety and protection of your family member, it is best we continue with current plan.

We are six months into COVID restrictions. We did launch a Spring/Summer menu in May but we felt the residents needed some change to their menu after seeing the same meals rotate for past 5 months. We just created a completely new Fall/Winter menu. We have just completed our first full four-week cycle. We are featuring more fall items such as apples, sweet potatoes, and pumpkin. We introduced some new menu items such as Sweet Potato Soup with carrots and apples, Mexican coleslaw, Turkey & Apple sandwich, Apple Crisp Bars and Pumpkin Fluff. Our current menu will run for 16 weeks and then we will start with the Winter/Spring menu. We updated our snack cart and it is readily available for residents to pick up snacks as they desire as well as delivered to the rooms. We know that you cannot share a meal but have been posting photos of the meals on Facebook. We like to see ‘Likes’ or comments. By posting photos, you can get a glimpse of their day.

We are in the final two-months of the two-year NOW (Nutrition for Optimal Weight) Grant. In the past few months, we installed new faux wood blinds in the dining room, purchased new Fiesta dinnerware of plates, bowls, soups bowls and coffee cups to enhance the dining experience and have classy aprons for the dietary team. Once again, be assured, even without the grant, we are continuously working on ways to make improvements to nutrition and dining in their home at ZHS.

**CALLING for RECIPES**

We are still accepting recipes. We now have a menu item called Mom’s Raisin Cookies. They are very soft cookie and SO delicious. **Do you have those recipes that the recipe card has grease or food spots all over it?**

Well, I bet those are your family favorites. If you have kept some of your family favorite recipes, we would like to incorporate some into our menus. That recipe might become “(loved one’s name) Mac ‘n Cheese” on the menu. Please drop off, mail or email to our dietitian, Renee Thompson, RD.

If you have any questions or concerns with the above information, please contact:
Renee Thompson, R.D. (Registered Dietitian) at 507-732-8417 or rthompson@zhs.sfhs.org

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**With the need for social distancing and lack of family, friends and volunteer visits, the Activity Department have been busy with creative ways for our residents to have fun while staying safe.**

We are slowly introducing more activities to our schedule including bingo and craft groups, while continuing to do mostly one: one visits in room and in social areas. Some things we do for in room visits include: YouTube videos, reading mail, stories, and reading the bible, making phone calls to friends and family, trivia games and reminiscing.

We were awarded a COVID-19 Technology Grant. This grant was developed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) and administered by the MN Department of Human Services. We received iPads to help residents watch their weekly community church service and connect with family via Facetime, Google Duo and Zoom.

With our negative results from our last two weeks of Covid-19 tests, we are able to welcome indoor visits in our Dayroom. We will be gradually adding more time slots in the weeks to come. Please be patient and understanding of the guidelines. *New policy change and our corporate is requiring visitors have a negative covid test result within three days of the each visit.*

The following rules will be enforced: Up to 2 people may visit at one time. All visitors will be screened at the Dayroom outdoor exit door. Visits will be held in Dayroom (outside door facing West side) Up to 25 minutes. We need to sanitize the area before starting a new visit. Visitors will be expected to provide their own mask. Visitors will agree to maintain the 6’ social distance from the residents. All items brought in for the resident needs to be given to staff for sanitizing.

Due to limited facilities for indoor visitation, we are only able to accommodate one visit per resident per week and we need to strictly enforce the time limit so others have an opportunity to see their loved one. Indoor visits and open window visits will be suspended if positive COVID-19 cases arise in the facility.

Upcoming holidays are going to look a bit different this year. At this time, we are unable to have visitors inside our facility, besides scheduled indoor visits in our Dayroom. We are planning for more activity staff here on holidays to assist with video chats and to provide more activities throughout the day.

If you would like to do a video chat, all you need is a smart phone, tablet or computer with a camera. If you would like to schedule a video chat, phone call or window visit, or an indoor visit, please contact Lacey Boesen, Activity Director at lboesen@zhs.sfhs.org or 507-732-8409.
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