



Covid-19 update 13/5/2020

Dear

I hope this letter finds you well. Since our last update and the subsequent Zoom meeting little has changed and we find ourselves in a world trying to understand what a new normal will look like. Whilst the news is focused on the progression of the virus, numbers of new cases and deaths, and provides a comprehensive narrative on testing, we remain focused on providing the best care to both our residents and our staff.

Our own experiences have followed the national picture. The number of residents and staff feeling unwell has reduced, and we now have few or no confirmed cases of Covid-19 in our homes. However, testing is still neither 100% accurate or readily available so we continue to monitor everyone's health and treat symptoms accordingly. Nearly all our staff, (except for those required to shield themselves) are now back at work, and staff reporting symptoms is at the lowest level since the start of the lockdown period.

Lockdown, and the rules surrounding it, are far from clear but we are working hard to understand how the changes announced on Sunday affect care homes. We have put plans in place to allow some limited visiting. There is more detailed information attached to this update that will outline our initial proposals. These are of course open to constant review, and we may need to make changes at short notice, but we will try our best to keep everyone informed of how things are working and any changes we might need to make.

Both homes have also started to provide some wellbeing and activity sessions to small groups of residents, and so far this is working well. As new ways of working and providing care develop over the coming weeks we will continue to ensure residents are able to socialise with one another and get back to some sort of normality.

We remain well supplied with PPE and have access to a large number of providers to help keep us stocked with the right equipment. We are signed up to all the various means of accessing testing, but these processes are still not working as we would hope, and so whilst we have been able to have some staff tested we cannot put any firm plans in place to test everyone. We continue to be able to access testing for residents through primary care services.

There is a lot of talk in the media and in our professional networks about the potential for a second wave of infection. It is for this reason that we are resisting a return to opening our homes fully and are taking what will seem to many like very small steps in starting small group activities and limited family visiting. However, by taking such small steps, we will be able to manage our infection prevention and control procedures more thoroughly and be better prepared should a second wave of Covid-19 become a reality.

I hope this update goes some way to providing assurance to you that we are doing the best we can for our residents and that we are trying to find a way forward as the situation continues to change.

Stay safe everyone

Richard

Please send all post to: **Sears Healthcare Limited**
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