



April 1, 2020

At this time, we remain free of COVID -19. Effective April 1, a new intervention is being implemented. A decision was made that all staff in all departments at Oak Hill are required to wear cloth masks.

Evidence points to surgical masks as the superior option, but with their critical shortage and the need to prioritize them for a time when we may have isolation requirements, we are currently conserving the N95 masks. Cloth masks can help to limit the spread of infection, even if there are only modest benefits in both self-protection and source control.

These cloth masks have been generously donated by members of our community who have taken the time to sew them. There are mixed reviews as to their effectiveness and use. The main purpose of cloth masks for Oak Hill is to try to limit the amount of exposure to others from someone who may unknowingly carry the virus. When we cough, sneeze or simply breathe, we emit droplets which are largely composed of saliva, mucus and salts and potentially dangerous microbes if we are infected. Respiratory illnesses such as COVID-19 are primarily spread by droplets expelled through the nose and mouth. These masks do help reduce the risk of transmission but we are aware that we need to continue other interventions such as proper handwashing and social distancing.

The use of these masks was discussed with the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Monroe County Health Department and our Medical Director.

At this point, all of our residents have been at Oak Hill without visitors except those who have been to the hospital. We are doing our best to readmit those coming from the hospital to Evergreen Pointe to keep the chance of possible exposure down. The purpose of these cloth masks is to reduce the risk of others being infected by our staff if they should have the virus without showing symptoms or only displaying mild symptoms.

We continue to daily review the most recent information regarding COVID-19. Our staff is working hard to protect the residents at Oak Hill while providing limited activities. We encourage you to “window visit” or visit through the internet. Please call one of our activity staff who would be glad to set this up for you. Please watch our oakhillmonroecounty.com website for updated information.

There are also many praying that we will be protected from this virus at Oak Hill. Your prayers and support are appreciated.

Kim Keckritz
Administrator