

Daily Family Update – Tuesday, June 2, 2020

Dear Mary Wade Families,

Yesterday the Governor issued an Executive Order requiring staff in all nursing homes in CT to be tested. Mary Wade began testing staff on May 6 and will be conducting a third round of staff testing tomorrow conducted by Fair Haven Community Health Center. After this we will work with our DPH partners and begin weekly testing.

Mary Wade has acted early and decisively in testing and cohorting of our residents thanks to the help of our clinical partners Fair Haven Community Health Center and Quest Diagnostics.

COVID-19 Positives

The following is a current update on our COVID-19 positive cases:

Boardman Residents: 4 residents are positive and being cared for in Kimberly 2

Kimberly Residents: 2 residents are positive and are being cared for in Kimberly 2

Recoveries

It's worth repeating what we reported yesterday: As the number of residents testing positive for COVID-19 decrease, conversely, the number of our recovered increase. This is certainly a happy number to report. *We have a total of 44 residents who have recovered (Kimberly: 22 residents and Boardman: 22 residents).* We reported our first recoveries on May 13. Since that day, we have continued to see our residents get stronger and improve. As soon as a resident shows no further symptoms and are isolated for the requisite number of days according to CDC guidelines, they are then transferred to our "recovered" unit for Kimberly and directly to their rooms at Boardman. Slowly, slowly we are taking steps to return to a new normal.

Family Outdoor Visits

The weather is getting warmer and our gardens are beginning to bloom.

Do you have a question, an idea you'd like to share? I would like to hear from you. You can contact me at dhunter@marywade.org or by phone at 203-672-7810.

Stay safe,

David V. Hunter, President & CEO

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Family Outdoor Visits

The weather is getting warmer and our gardens are beginning to bloom. Just a reminder that we can schedule a "window" visit while we're waiting delivery of our Plexiglas divider for outdoors. Contact Tiffany Burnham (tburnham@marywade.org) for residents in Kimberly and Joy Rembert (jrembert@marywade.org) for residents in Boardman to schedule your visit.

Do you have a question, an idea you'd like to share? I would like to hear from you. You can contact me at dhunter@marywade.org or by phone at 203-672-7810.

Stay safe,

David V. Hunter, President & CEO

Daily Family Update – Wednesday, June 3, 2020

Dear Mary Wade Families,

As our state slowly opens, my worst fear is that we might see an increase in infection rates. At Mary Wade we are ever vigilant in our infection protocols, practicing proper hygiene and social distancing.

I hope that you too will continue to stay safe, preferably at home as much as possible, wash your hands, wear a mask and social distance. We truly are all in this together. While we have seen major improvements at Mary Wade, we do not want to return to the weeks and months we have recently struggled through.

COVID-19 Positives

The following is a current update on our COVID-19 positive cases:

Boardman Residents: 3 residents are positive and being cared for in Kimberly 2

Kimberly Residents: 1 residents are positive and are being cared for in Kimberly 2

Recoveries

We had another Kimberly resident and a Boardman resident recovered today. This brings us to a total of 46 recovered.

Family Outdoor Visits

I thought it would be helpful to share with you our official policy regarding the Family Outdoor Visits during this time. I realize many of you have questions. We understand how confusing these rules and guidelines can seem to be. But we are all in this together and we all recognize that our primary goal is keep everyone, ie: your loved one, safe and healthy. These policies follow the CDC and DPH guidelines and recommendations. Contact Tiffany Burnham (tburnham@marywade.org) for residents in Kimberly and Joy Rembert (jrembert@marywade.org) for residents in Boardman to schedule your visit. **Click here** to review the details of the policy and if you have any questions, please contact Stan DeCosta at sdecosta@marywade.org.

Thank you so much for being our partner during this very difficult and trying time. Your loved one's health and wellbeing are first and foremost our highest objective. Having you in our corner makes all the difference. Let me know what you think and any concerns you might have. You can contact me at dhunter@marywade.org or by phone at 203-672-7810.

Stay safe,

David V. Hunter, President & CEO

Daily Family Update – Thursday, June 4, 2020

Dear Mary Wade Families,

Today, some of our residents enjoyed “Thirsty Thursday” outdoors in the gardens. It was a picture perfect day and a reminder that we will get through this and be together again.

In the meantime, we continue to participate on calls and updates with our professional advocacy association LeadingAge CT and LeadingAge National, as well as DPH, CMS and the CDC. As our nation begins to reopen, so too our senior living and care facilities will reopen...slowly and cautiously.

COVID-19 Positives

The following is a current update on our COVID-19 positive cases:

Boardman Residents: 3 residents are positive and being cared for in Kimberly 2

Kimberly Residents: 1 resident is positive and is being cared for in Kimberly 2

Recoveries

We had another Kimberly resident and a Boardman resident recovered today. This brings us to a total of 46 recovered.

Testing

Yesterday and today, we tested all residents and staff who had previously tested negative. We hope to receive the results within the next 48 hours. We will continue testing weekly. Mary Wade was the first nursing home in CT to test residents and staff. We continue to work with our healthcare partners at Fair Haven Community Health Care to anticipate and look ahead to identify ways to make our residents and staff healthier and safer.

Family Outdoor Visits

Contact Tiffany Burnham (tburnham@marywade.org) for residents in Kimberly and Joy Rembert (jrembert@marywade.org) for residents in Boardman to schedule your visit. **Click here** to review the details of the policy and if you have any questions, please contact Stan DeCosta at sdecosta@marywade.org.

Thank you so much for being our partner during this very difficult and trying time. Your loved one's health and wellbeing are first and foremost our highest objective. Having you in our corner makes all the difference. Let me know what you think and any concerns you might have. You can contact me at dhunter@marywade.org or by phone at 203-672-7810.

Stay safe,

David V. Hunter, President & CEO

Family Update – Wednesday, June 10, 2020

Dear Mary Wade Families,

Today our Boardman Residents were treated to lunch outdoors. They enjoyed a cookout on the open grill by our own Director of Dining Services Laurene Ortowski. Administrators and staff served residents who were seated at six foot long tables that were spaced around the gardens. Everyone was thrilled to be outdoors and to see their friends and neighbors who they hadn't seen in weeks.

It was awesome to see everyone enjoying the gardens again. We look forward to doing these outdoor activities for all of our residents as the summer unfolds.

Family Outdoor Visits

We have a full schedule of family outdoor visits lined up and we have already had some window visits while we await delivery of our Plexiglas divider. Everyone will be required to wear masks and practice social distancing. Our policy reflects the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (DMS) and the CT Dept. of Public Health (DPH). Remember, to schedule your visits contact Tiffany Burnham at tburnham@marywade.org for residents in Kimberly and Joy Rembert jrembert@marywade.org in Boardman. **Click here** to review the details of the policy and if you have any questions, please contact Stan DeCosta at sdecosta@marywade.org.

Weekly Testing

Today (Wednesday) and tomorrow, we will begin conducting weekly testing of all residents and staff who have previously tested negative for the COVID-19. This is based on the recommendations of Governor Lamont and the DPH. We will be conducting weekly testing until at least the end of July. Testing will allow us to conduct appropriate cohorting and will aid in managing the spread of the virus.

COVID-19 Positives

The following is a current update on our COVID-19 positive cases:

Boardman Residents: 2 residents are positive and being cared for in Kimberly 2

Kimberly Residents: 3 residents are positive and are being cared for in Kimberly 2

Thank you again for your support and cooperation as we continue to battle this awful virus. We are all in this together and we will eventually beat this enemy. If I can answer any questions you might have, please contact me at dhunter@marywade.org or by phone at 203-672-7810.

With gratitude,

David V. Hunter, President & CEO

Family Update – Friday, June 12, 2020

Dear Mary Wade Families,

The results from our weekly testing have come back and I am delighted to report that none of our residents have tested positive! This is the first time we have received a 100% “no COVID” test results. It means our testing, cohorting and infection control measures are working and are proving successful in reducing the spread of the virus at Mary Wade.

CT Dept. of Public Health

This week we were visited by the DPH. This is our fifth unannounced survey visit by the DPH to inspect infection control protocols and practices since March. Each of these visits have resulted in a “no deficiencies” report by the surveyors. Our staff, led by Kara Taylor, Director of Clinical Services, and Stan DeCosta, Executive Director are to be commended and recognized for their professionalism and outstanding adherence to the highest standards of care for our residents. Our CNA’s, LPN’s, RN’s, therapists, housekeeping and administrative support team are working hard and doing an amazing job of keeping our residents safe and healthy. They truly are our unsung heroes.

COVID-19 Positives

The following is a current update on our COVID-19 positive cases:

Boardman Residents: We are so happy that our Boardman residents who were being cared for on Kimberly 2 have fully recovered.

Kimberly Residents: 3 residents are positive and are being cared for in Kimberly 2

Thank you for your continued encouragement and support. We have shared your comments with our staff and it makes a difference. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions. You can contact me at dhunter@marywade.org or by phone at 203-672-7810.

Have a good weekend.

With gratitude,

David V. Hunter, President & CEO

Family Update – Monday, June 15, 2020

Dear Mary Wade Families,

You will notice with this update that we have no COVID-19 positive cases to report. We do have 3 residents who were positive and are now consider recovered based on the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations and protocols. All of our residents continue to be monitored and those residents who have tested negative will continue to be tested weekly.

This is a major milestone for all of us. After three months, we have finally turned a corner. But we continue to be vigilant in monitoring, testing, and adhering to safe practices to care for our residents and staff. Now is not the time to relax but to move forward cautiously and responsibly. And, we are appreciative of your cooperation as we move together in the weeks and months ahead.

Family Outdoor Visits

We are all looking forward to family visits and I just wanted to remind you of our Visit Procedure. ***Click here*** for policy. Stan DeCosta and I were recently interviewed by WFSB regarding family outdoor visits. ***Click here*** to see the segment.

Thank you for your continued encouragement and support. We share your comments with our staff and it makes a difference. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions. You can contact me at dhunter@marywade.org or by phone at 203-672-7810.

With gratitude,

David V. Hunter, President & CEO

Family Update – Wednesday, June 17, 2020

Dear Mary Wade Families,

Today marks the start of our State's Phase 2 Opening. I hope you will approach Phase 2 with caution and with the knowledge that the virus is still with us. Handwashing, wearing your masks and practicing social distancing will help us to win this battle and return to life as we all remember it.

Weekly Testing

Today and tomorrow we will be conducting our weekly testing of all negative COVID residents and staff. We continue to work with our health care partners at Fair Haven Community Health Care and Quest Diagnostics and are grateful for their collaboration.

Mary Wade Wants You to Know

...that the health and safety of your loved one drives our mission to provide the highest quality medical and social programs for older adults. The last few months have tested all of us, as well as the broader health care systems and infrastructure. We have learned a great deal and we will use this knowledge and experience to combat any future threat of infection. We might not see a resurgence and then again, we might. But we are prepared.

I had an opportunity to talk about the last few months with iHeart Radio personality Vinnie Penn. To hear the brief interview, ***click here***.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions. You can contact me at dhunter@marywade.org or by phone at 203-672-7810.

Thank you,

David V. Hunter, President & CEO

Family Update – Friday, June 19, 2020

Dear Mary Wade Families,

I wish all of our fathers and guardians a very Happy Father's Day and look forward to a time soon when we can all celebrate holidays, graduations, birthdays and other milestone events all together again.

Ventilation

In my May 11 Update I talked about the issue of improved ventilation. Mary Wade is taking a proactive approach in exploring a healthier breathing environment for our residents. Today, we took the first of several steps to improve the ventilation system in the Kimberly Building. The air filters in all of the rooftop units were replaced with high efficiency filters in order to help prevent the spread of bacteria found in the Covid-19 virus, or any other airborne virus such as the seasonal influenza. Additionally, airflow was increased to further improve the filtration process.

Weekly Testing

We are still receiving results from this week's testing and so far we continue to see no new infections. Any changes, we will be sure to inform you immediately and actions taken.

Outdoor Family Visits

Outdoor family visits are taking place in our gardens and depending upon the weather. We've recently enjoyed some beautiful weather this week and our residents and families were able to enjoy the fresh air, gardens and each other. Contact Tiffany Burnham at tburnham@marywade.org for residents in Kimberly and Joy Rembert at jrembert@marywade.org for residents in Boardman to schedule your visit. **Click here** to review the details of the policy and if you have any questions, please contact Stan DeCosta at sdecosta@marywade.org.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions. You can contact me at dhunter@marywade.org or by phone at 203-672-7810.

Thank you,

David V. Hunter, President & CEO

Family Update – Monday, June 22, 2020

Dear Mary Wade Families,

I am pleased to report that Mary Wade has not had a positive COVID-19 test result of either residents or staff, in more than 14 days. All of our previous COVID cases have fully recovered. Based on the recommended guidelines and Governor Lamont's Executive Order issued on June 17 (***click here*** for Executive Order No. 7AAA), we will be reducing our testing to staff only, every other week. Residents will continue to be tested if they display symptom and as always, we will continue to monitor everyone very closely.

Outdoor Family Visits

In a previous update, we reported that we had been waiting for a Plexiglas barrier that we ordered for our outdoor visits. A portion of it arrived last week. After review, we decided to forgo the Plexiglas barrier and move forward and conduct our outdoor visits without the additional protection. We have converted some of the scheduled window visits to outdoor visits with weather permitting. I encourage you to sign up for your outdoor visit as we are scheduling throughout the week and weekend, when staff allows. Contact Tiffany Burnham at tburnham@marywade.org for residents in Kimberly and Joy Rembert at jrembert@marywade.org for residents in Boardman to schedule your visit. **Click here** to review the details of the policy and if you have any questions, please contact Stan DeCosta at sdecosta@marywade.org.

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Thank you,

David V. Hunter, President & CEO

Family Update – Wednesday, June 24, 2020

Dear Mary Wade Families,

You should have received an email from us yesterday urging you to contact Congress to “Act for Older Adults”. It was a day when senior communities, their families and providers joined together to contact their representatives and give voice to issues impacting older adults. Thank you for adding your voice to this critical issue. To read more about the Act for Older Adults campaign, [click here](#).

Balancing Precautions with Social Interaction

We were recently asked the question “...how is MW going to balance precautions intended to protect staff and residents with the human need for social interaction...?” Great question and it is one of the many that we grapple with since the very beginning of this pandemic. Our practices from the very beginning have been guided by the recommendations and guidelines issued by the Centers of Disease Control (CDC), the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and CT’s State and municipal Departments of Public Health.

Mary Wade’s Therapeutic Recreation staff and our nurses have worked tirelessly to introduce new programs geared to increase social engagement during isolation. Seems a bit contradictory, doesn’t it? We’ve stepped up recreation activities, like “hallway bingo”, and waffle carts. With the warmer weather, we have held outdoor concerts for residents. We’ve conducted continuous video calls with families. We’ve recently introduced window visits and last week we initiated outdoor family visits dependent upon the weather. This week we started communal dining in Boardman, in two seatings to accommodate for social distancing. We are working with the DPH on developing a similar plan for our Kimberly residents.

All this and more, our staff has creatively and safely initiated to increase social engagement during a time of isolation. It’s not ideal, but it has been helpful in improving the health of our residents. We will continue to increase these activities and now that the weather is warming up, we hope to do more outdoor activities and visits to the garden which is always energizing.

We will continue to monitor each and every resident and respond to their needs while keeping them safe. We value and appreciate your cooperation and continued support of these efforts.

Outdoor Family Visits – A Reminder

Remember to sign up for your outdoor visit as we are scheduling throughout the week and weekend, when staff allows. Contact Tiffany Burnham at tburnham@marywade.org for residents in Kimberly and Joy Rembert at jrembert@marywade.org for residents in Boardman to schedule your visit. **Click here** to review the details of the policy and if you have any questions, please contact Stan DeCosta at sdecosta@marywade.org.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions. You can contact me at dhunter@marywade.org or by phone at 203-672-7810.

Thank you,

David V. Hunter, President & CEO

Family Update – Friday, June 26, 2020

Dear Mary Wade Families,

It was “Freshen Up Friday: Curls & More” today. That means our Therapeutic Recreation Staff lent their beauty skills to any of our residents who were interested. We are beginning to look into reopening our salon soon.

Ventilation Improvements

As I mentioned in early Family Updates, Mary Wade is actively exploring and installing improved air filtration systems throughout the campus. Last Friday, I mentioned that we installed high efficiency filters on our rooftop units in the Kimberly building. This is only the initial phase of a multi-phase initiative that resulted from a team of staff, Board members, architects and engineers. **Click here** to read Mary Wade’s statement for more detail on this project to improve air quality and provide a safer building for residents, families and staff.

Outdoor Family Visits

The CT Department of Public Health (DPH) and the State Long Term Care Ombudsman, in a joint letter, have detailed visitation guidelines which you can **read here**. Mary Wade’s family outdoor visitation policy is based on these guidelines. We know how difficult this has been but it is critical that we all adhere to these recommendations to keep everyone safe. To schedule your visit, contact Tiffany Burnham at tburnham@marywade.org for residents in Kimberly and Joy Rembert at jrembert@marywade.org for residents in Boardman. **Click here** to review the details of the policy and if you have any questions, please contact Stan DeCosta at sdecosta@marywade.org.

Enjoy your weekend and I look forward to communicating with you again next week. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions. You can contact me at dhunter@marywade.org or by phone at 203-672-7810.

Thank you,

David V. Hunter, President & CEO

Family Update – Monday, June 29, 2020

Dear Mary Wade Families,

Just a reminder that the Coronavirus has not disappeared. Everyday lately we're seeing another state dealing with increased hospitalizations just as we did not so very long ago. It can return to CT and to our senior care communities. We must continue to be vigilant and observe the recommendations put out by our healthcare providers and our healthcare agencies. *Wash your hands often, wear a mask and social distance.*

Testing

The results of last week's round of testing once again resulted in NO new positive infections. That means we have been 21-days COVID-free and will not have to test again until July 8-9, according to CDC and CMS guidelines.

Outdoor Family Visits – Face Shields

Because we decided against using a Plexiglas barrier, we have asked our visitors to wear face shields in addition to the mask. We realize that these shields, combined with the mask and the requisite 6 ft social distancing makes it very challenging for many of our residents who are hearing impaired, to enjoy these family visits. Subsequently, we will be reviewing whether to adjust or eliminate this particular face shield protocol. We will let you know as soon as possible if there are any changes. **Click here** to review the details of Mary Wade's Outdoor Visitation policy. If you have any questions, please contact Stan DeCosta at sdecosta@marywade.org.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions. You can contact me at dhunter@marywade.org or by phone at 203-672-7810.

Thank you,

David V. Hunter, President & CEO