

Family Update – Friday, September 4, 2020

Dear Mary Wade Families,

“We Miss You”

That’s the subject line to our most recent Mary Wade post to friends and families. We have created a virtual tour of our Boardman Residential Care Home and will be opening our Adult Day Center on a limited basis and increasing our Transportation hours. **Click here** to see the post if you have not seen it yet. If you are not receiving these emails, contact Kara Hunter our Marketing Manager.

Adult Day Center Opens on Limited Basis

Our Adult Day Center (ADC) has already been serving our residents living at Boardman. Effective Tuesday, September 8, we will reopen to a limited capacity to accommodate for social distancing. Tyisha Barrett, Director of the ADC, and her staff are looking forward to seeing familiar and new faces again. If you are interested in attending our ADC, or if you know of someone who would enjoy and benefit from the social interaction, the fun and the entertainment, just contact Tyisha at 203-562-7222 or [click here](#).

Testing

The CT Department of Public Health (DPH) has issued new guidelines regarding testing of staff. The supplemental guidance outlines the surveillance testing of staff that is to occur once a nursing home reaches 14 days of no positive test results. Mary Wade is in that category. Beginning next week, we will be testing 25% of the staff, on a rotating basis. This testing will be conducted weekly.

Infection Control, Cleaning and Air Quality

Our focus on Infection Control and advanced cleaning and air quality issues have always been important to us. During the last six months we have learned a lot about the importance of “best practice” and state-of-the-art infection control, cleaning standards and improving air quality and construction. We are implementing new policies and procedures to reflect these advances and we’re introducing new technologies in both our main campus and in our new assisted living construction. Our staff is always researching new ideas and ways we can serve our residents and families better.

Gratitude

Mary Wade continues to be COVID-free thanks to the awesome work of our entire staff led by Executive Director Stan DeCosta, Director of Clinical Services Kara Taylor, Patricia Neeson, our guru in all things related to Infection Control and Staff Education. From our clinical staff, to our Housekeeping Team, to our Dining Services, to our security detail, to our Front Desk/Reception, Mary Wade is proud to boast the BEST employees, and the most caring. We also can’t do our job without your partnership, our families. It has been so hard for all of us, but especially for

you. Your support and continued participation to ensure a safe and healthy environment for our residents is very much appreciated. Thank you.

Happy Labor Day to you and to our entire Mary Wade staff. Please stay safe, wear your mask, wash hands frequently and practice social distancing...for everyone's sake.

Thank you again for your support and the privilege of caring for your loved one. I hope you have a safe and enjoyable holiday weekend. You can always reach me at dhunter@marywade.org or by phone at 203-672-7810.

Stay well, stay safe,

David V. Hunter, President & CEO

Family Update – Friday, September 11, 2020

Dear Mary Wade Families,

Hearing directly from our staff about their experiences over the last seven months has been a precious gift. Rosanne Mondrone, Mary Wade's Director of Community Relations, has shared her latest experiences and thoughts. [Click here to read "Awakening"](#).

Testing

This past week, we tested the initial 25% of our staff. Next week, we'll be testing the next group. The CT Department of Public Health (DPH) has issued these new guidelines regarding testing of all staff. The supplemental guidance outlines the surveillance testing of staff that is to occur once a nursing home reaches 14 days of no positive test results. Mary Wade is in that category. While the guidelines pertain to only nursing homes, we are testing all of our employees throughout our campus who have direct contact with our residents including Kimberly and Boardman staff.

What You Don't See

Tiffany Burnham, Director of Recreation Therapy, leads a team of dedicated individuals to ensure our residents are engaged, social and connected with their friends and family. You probably also know that her team is responsible for organizing and staffing all family visits, both in person and virtual. Since March, they have conducted a total of 1,073 visits, both virtual and otherwise. This is in addition to their other recreation activities. It requires all hands on deck to schedule, physically set up, connect and staff each visit. I hope you will join me in expressing your appreciation to Tiffany and her staff for their dedication and commitment to our residents.

Visitation Policy

We continue to review our policies based on the guidance from our federal, state and local authorities. Our policies reflect the current recommendations and we continue to participate on daily calls with these agencies as well as our national and state professional organization, LeadingAge. Our staff is looking ahead to the colder months ahead and the recommendations that will be issued to accommodate visits.

So many of the changes Mary Wade had had to implement have been difficult and life changing for all of us, for our residents, our families and for our staff. You have helped to make our job easier with your understanding and patience. We are all in this together, and together we will ensure the safety and health of our community.

Finally, I want to acknowledge and remember the lives we lost 19 years ago in the September 11th attacks. For those lives and their families who carry the burden of loss, let them be a tribute to the hope and resilience we all look to in helping us get through this prolonged public health crisis.

Thank you again for your support and the privilege of caring for your loved one. I hope you have a safe weekend. You can always reach me at dhunter@marywade.org or by phone at 203-672-7810.

Stay well, stay safe,

David V. Hunter, President & CEO

Family Update – Friday, September 18, 2020

Dear Mary Wade Families,

Last Sunday would have been Mary Wade's annual Family Fun Festival. The entire campus looks forward to this event each year when our families and residents gather in the Gardens for an afternoon of music, games, and old fashioned fun. I for one, missed seeing you all together and I know you did too.

But our residents and staff did celebrate with their own entertainment. "Mary Wade's Got Talent" brought 14 acts on our "Garden Stage" under a large tent. They sang, danced, and told jokes. First prize went to the group from the ADC who sang "YMCA" by the Village People. Music and karaoke was provided by DJ Bob Simon and Italian ices were provided by Jose Torres and Catch the Flava. It was an awesome day and a lot of fun.

Adult Day Center

I am happy to see that our clients are slowly returning to our ADC program. While, right now, we are only opened to limited capacity, we still have slots available if your loved one wants to renew friendships, get more exercise, or just want to get out of the house for a day. Questions? Contact Rosanne Mondrone at rmondrone@marywade.org.

Staff Voices

Hearing directly from our staff about their experiences over the last seven months has been a precious gift. Rosanne Mondrone, Mary Wade's Director of Community Relations, has shared her journey from the beginning as someone who contracted the virus to returning to a new normal. Her observations regarding the relentless challenges and the hard work of our Mary Wade staff to care for our residents, paints a vivid portrait of life on the front lines. **Click here** to read all of Rosanne's essays.

Testing

Our first week of staff COVID testing resulted in 100% negative test results. We completed our second week of staff testing yesterday. I want to thank our staff for their diligent efforts to stay safe, adhere to best practice when it comes to infection control. These latest testing guidelines pertain to only nursing homes, however we are testing all of our employees throughout our campus including Kimberly and Boardman staff.

Thank you again for your support and the privilege of caring for your loved one. I hope you have a safe weekend. You can always reach me at dhunter@marywade.org or by phone at 203-672-7810.

Stay well, stay safe,

David V. Hunter, President & CEO

Family Update – Friday, September 25, 2020

Dear Mary Wade Families,

I write this as our residents are singing along in the Garden to “Shine on Harvest Moon”. It’s a beautiful early autumn afternoon and it’s great to see so many enjoying our green space. It almost seems as if life is back to normal. But in reality, it’s far from we have been used to only six months ago.

We continue to be vigilant and adhere to best practices and the most up to date guidance concerning infection control practices throughout the campus. You should take comfort in knowing that our staff are the BEST and we take our responsibility to care for your loved one very seriously.

COVID-19 Positives

Today, we learned of our first COVID positive case in nearly three months. A Boardman resident was transferred to the hospital this morning and upon arrival, tested positive for COVID. As a result, and in accordance with Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and CT Department of Public Health guidance, Boardman residents will be quarantined for at least 14 days. It saddens me to report this, but it is the right thing to do to keep our residents safe.

Testing

Our second week of staff COVID testing resulted in 100% negative test results. We completed our third week of staff testing yesterday. I want to thank our staff for their diligent efforts to stay safe, adhere to best practice when it comes to infection control. We are awaiting guidance from the DPH whether we should return to testing all staff each week in light of the new infection.

Mary Wade Culture

One of our strategic goals identified in our 3-year Strategic Action Plan, is a focus on “People Development”. Our people are the key to Mary Wade’s success in delivering the highest quality Person-Centered Care. To that end, we have surveyed over 130 employees to ask them to identify the values that are important to them personally, the values that currently describe Mary Wade’s work culture, and the values they would ideally like to see. The top 5 “desire cultural values” that our employees identified are: accountability, teamwork, caring, continuous improvement and continuous learning. I look forward to sharing more about our culture values, how they are embodied in our staff and how they impact the care of your loved one.

Thank you again for your ongoing support and understanding as we navigating through this pandemic. I hope you enjoy a healthy and safe weekend. Remember, you can always reach me at dhunter@marywade.org or by phone at 203-672-7810.

Stay well, stay safe,

David V. Hunter, President & CEO

Family Update – Tuesday, September 29, 2020

Dear Mary Wade Families,

There has been a lot of media coverage concerning nursing home visitation. I wanted to send out communication to hopefully answer any questions that you may have.

On September 17th the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services issued [guidance](#) to the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health (see DPH guidance [here](#)) regarding nursing home visitation. I know that some media coverage is delivered in a way that appears that visitation is open fully. That is not the case.

Visitation will continue to be scheduled and will continue to happen outdoors whenever practicable. Under certain circumstances indoor visits will happen in a designated area inside Mary Wade with the same guidelines set for outdoor visits such as the number of visitors allowed, universal masking etc. Visitors will need to continue to adhere to the core principles and staff will continue to monitor visits.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate these new recommendations. If you have any questions, you can reach me at sdecosta@marywade.org.

Sincerely,

Stan DeCosta
Executive Director