



At home in Camden

November 18, 2020

TO: Residents and Family Members

FROM: Loriman Looke, Executive Director and Administrator

Thanksgiving and the winter holidays are swiftly approaching. We know, of course, that you long to celebrate these special occasions with the people you love—especially after the difficult year we've all had. But as much as we wish it were otherwise, COVID is still very much with us.

In recent weeks, Knox County has experienced a significant increase in the number of diagnosed cases of COVID-19. Based on the current numbers, the Maine CDC has pushed Knox County into the High Transmission Rate category. This rating prohibits Quarry Hill from resuming communal dining, indoor visits with family or friends (other than compassionate visits with a provider's order), group activities and resident outings (with the exception of essential appointments accompanied by a Quarry Hill care team member).

So how best to celebrate the holidays safely? Focused as we are on protecting the health of our vulnerable, older-adult residents, we must request that residents not join loved ones for in-person gatherings this year, and instead urge you to consider getting together virtually, using Zoom, FaceTime, Go To Meeting or Skype. Even just a group phone call that allows loved ones to chat with each other as though they were in the same room will be better than spending Thanksgiving, Hanukkah or Christmas apart. Some families have simply decided to postpone holiday get-togethers until spring or summer, when they can throw a grand shindig outdoors.

Prioritizing the well-being of all who live and work at Quarry Hill is at the forefront of every decision made. We continue to rely on the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Maine CDC, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and our parent organization, MaineHealth, to direct us in these efforts. The most recent guidance from the Maine CDC states that individuals who reside in a congregate setting, such as Quarry Hill, who

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choose to leave for visits with family and friends, be considered as “status unknown” with regards to exposure to the virus upon their return. As such, any resident who participates in an outing of this kind will need to quarantine for fourteen days upon his or her return to the Anderson Inn. Given what’s involved in quarantining and safely responding to a person whose COVID-19 status is unknown, please recognize the burden that this will place on both the resident and our care team members.

Believe me, I know how much the human heart hungers for the comforts of family during the holidays—especially at the tail end of a tough year. Nonetheless, statistics show that the COVID pandemic rages on. Please know that, however you and yours choose to celebrate, our care team will do everything we can to make the holidays meaningful for all Quarry Hill residents.