

December 10, 2020

Dear Lorien Residents and Families:

Earlier this week, Governor Hogan, along with Deputy Secretary Dr. Jinlene Chan and Assistant Secretary Bryan Mroz of the Maryland Department of Health, outlined an initial plan for the COVID-19 vaccine distribution. Thankfully, the Centers for Disease Control has prioritized nursing home residents and staff to receive the vaccine first. Pending Food and Drug Administration approval of the first vaccine, Maryland could begin receiving its first allotted batch as early as next week. The Maryland Department of Health has also compiled a FAQs around Maryland's vaccination plan and the COVID-19 vaccine here: <https://covidlink.maryland.gov/content/faqs/#faqVP>. **We will keep you updated as we know more.**

As COVID-19 cases throughout the state continue to increase daily, we are still unable to conduct indoor visitation in all of our facilities. Unfortunately, it appears indoor visitation will **not** be an option for most facilities through the holidays. Please continue to connect with your loved ones virtually.

I realize you know what our industry's employees have been enduring for the past nine months, as they have borne the burden of caring for those who are ill with COVID-19 or other diseases. We often see them as the people who provide bedside care or those who distribute medicines, or assist with activities of daily living or deliver needed therapies. But they also include those who prepare meals, ensure adequate stocks of linens and supplies, maintain our facilities and grounds, and handle all the administrative functions necessary for the smooth functioning of our senior care facilities. Each of them has joined together to create the team that has worked tirelessly and in a loving spirit to care for and sustain our residents, who often have been unable to receive family visitation.

Lindsay Robey, MS, Assisted Living Admissions Director at our Encore at Turf Valley community, recently found moving words that perfectly express the compassion our Lorien team displays every day. I thought you would find continued inspiration in her message and wanted to share it with you.

In case you're wondering

In case you're wondering, your loved one did not die alone. One of us was with them to hold their hand and tell them it was ok. We told them that you loved them and to not be afraid.

In case you're wondering, they knew you loved them and would have been there if you could.

In case you're wondering, we kept them comfortable and they did not suffer. We may have even shared a smile, song or laugh.

In case you're wondering, we tried and thought of everything to save your loved one.

In case you're wondering, it was the worst call we had to make and there are times we cry before we can call you.

In case you're wondering, yes, we truly did love and care deeply about them and it hurts so much to see them go, especially when you can do nothing about it.

In case you're wondering, we really do feel like they are a part of our family and you are as well. We see them every day, talk with them, laugh with them, fix their glasses, help them call you, and whatever else small thing will make their day better.

In case you're wondering, we wish we knew what to say to you to make it better and not hurt so much but there really is nothing we can say. We want to comfort you, hug you and cry with you but we can't (even though we do anyway at times). We try to be strong for you while we are broken inside over the loss of your loved one.

In case you're wondering, some of us are questioning our careers and why we continue to do this every day. Truth is, most of us don't have a choice. This isn't a job, it's a calling and a passion. We think about your loved one when we are home with our own families, at night when we can't sleep, and on our way back in to care for them. There is no break, this is a way of life, not a job.

In case you're wondering, some of us are not ok but we show up every day to make sure your loved one is ok. We cry in the bathrooms, our offices, in our cars. We feel so helpless sometimes against an invisible opponent.

In case you're wondering, we love your loved one and you and truly mean it when we say we will miss them and you and to please keep in touch.

In case you were wondering....

Sincerely,

Lou Grimmel, Sr.
CEO, Lorien Health Services