

April 15, 2021

Dear Lorien Residents and Families:

Over the last two weeks, many of you have communicated concerns about the most recent Johnson & Johnson vaccine, the vaccination policy at Lorien, and the use of smart voice technology in our communities. I will be addressing these topics in this letter tonight.

Earlier this week, Maryland needed to pause the use of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. This was done to give federal officials time to review reports of an extremely rare and severe type of blood clot found in 6 out of 6.8 million Americans who received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. These cases were found in 6 women aged 18 to 48 who experienced symptoms within 13 days after their injection.

Lorien is following the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC) guidance around the Johnson & Johnson vaccine with an abundance of caution. A small number of residents have received the single dose vaccine and we are carefully monitoring them for any possible adverse reactions.

Currently, we are awaiting further guidance from the state regarding supply for our vaccination clinics. Please consider that even if you are vaccinated, COVID-19 infection and spread is possible. We have experienced cases in some of our communities where fully vaccinated staff and residents have either contracted symptomatic or asymptomatic COVID. The best protection that any current vaccine can assure is a 95% effectiveness rate. This still leaves 5% or 1 in 20 vaccine recipients susceptible to COVID. It is important to continue to strictly abide by the CDC guidelines and adhere to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention, including physical distancing, wearing a mask, and proper hand washing hygiene.

We have had several inquiries about whether we will require the vaccine for our staff. Lorien has not implemented a mandatory vaccination program and we continue to rely on our strict infection control procedures to protect our residents. Neither the State of Maryland nor the federal government has mandated vaccinations. In fact, it is questionable whether employers even have the legal right to mandate that employees be vaccinated since the available vaccines only have emergency use authorization (EUA) from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as opposed to full FDA approval. And even if employers were to implement mandatory vaccination policies, employees could still refuse on very broad religious grounds.

We have strongly encouraged our employees to get vaccinated, and have conducted multiple staff and resident vaccination programs at each Lorien facility. We have also given time off for employees to get vaccinated, and given financial incentives to encourage vaccinations.

We also continue to encourage our families to learn more about the vaccine and register for an appointment. As of Monday, Marylanders age 16 and older became eligible for the vaccine through all providers, as well as mass vaccinations sites. To find a clinic near you, click here: [www.COVIDvax.maryland.gov](http://www.COVIDvax.maryland.gov).

As a reminder, Lorien is not permitted to allow the use of smart voice technology (e.g., Amazon Alexa and Echo, Google Home, Apple Siri, etc.) in our facilities and resident rooms. The technology and devices connect, engage, and exchange data, and may pose significant cybersecurity and privacy concerns. We understand this is a disappointing policy for some, but know protecting our residents' personal health information (PHI) is one of Lorien's highest priorities.

Finally, please join me in wishing Taneytown residents, Mary Jane and Wilbur, a Happy 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! What an incredible milestone. We were honored to share it with them both this week.

Sincerely,

Lou Grimmel, CEO

