



September 3, 2020

To Our Residents, and their Families and Friends,

We are still grateful that the COVID-19 mitigation strategies that we began to put in place in early March appear to continue to be successful at this point. We appreciate your partnership as we know there have been sacrifices on your part due to the strict visitation requirements that we have had to put in place. We also want to take this opportunity to again thank our staff for their adherence to all the new protocols and protection procedures. We are writing today to share news.

As you may be aware, Secretary Cohen has issued Secretarial Order #3 which will permit access to outdoor visitation in Nursing Homes under strict guidelines. We are communicating to let you know that Hillcrest is in the process of reviewing the guidelines and extensive corresponding requirements to safely determine the best way to implement an outdoor visitation protocol. The requirements for allowed outdoor visitation are very restrictive, burdensome, and labor intensive. In our opinion, the restrictions that are being placed on this limited outdoor visitation will create additional frustration and anxiety for the residents and family members. For example, a state requirement will eliminate privacy during the visit as staff must be present to monitor residents and visitors to keep “six feet or more of separation”, and not touch during the course of the visit.

Despite the restrictions, our goal is to continue to explore ways that we can allow some sort of limited outdoor visitation that will meet all the requirements within the secretarial order. We realize how important this is for many of you. We will communicate additional details next week regarding the implementation of the outdoor visitation policy, as the protocol and procedure are finalized. While we move forward with this process, please know that we are and will continue to offer our main lobby window visits (with or without assistance), and virtual visits via FaceTime, Google Duo, Skype, and Zoom. We suggest these existing options to visit with your loved one, and want to make sure you understand that outdoor visits will just be another option we may be able to add in the near future.

Thank you for keeping all of our residents and staff members in your thoughts and prayers; please reach out to us directly if you have any questions. We will continue to take steps available to us to protect your loved ones and help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Sincerely,

Ted Smith, Administrator
Hillcrest Durham

Lisa Lee, Administrator
Hillcrest Raleigh