

St. Vincent de Paul Rehabilitation and Nursing Center

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August 27, 2021

Families, friends, residents and staff;

The county positivity rate remains at a “substantial” risk of transmission, evident by the continuous active cases throughout Coos County. Berlin’s numbers have slightly decreased; however, the positive cases throughout the county remain consistent. We continue to test staff twice a week, Tuesday’s results returned negative and the second round of testing is scheduled for Friday afternoon.

Last week the federal government announced it will be mandatory for long-term care staff to receive the COVID-19 vaccine; religious and health exclusions may apply. As an organization, we have announced unvaccinated staff shall receive their first dose, obtain approved exemption or resign employment by September 13; staff must be fully vaccinated by the end of October 2021. Although this is a mandate, we hope vaccinated staff provides a level of comfort and reassurance to families that each resident is being cared for and protected to the highest degree. The mandate is accompanied with controversy from some individuals with continued uncertainty and hesitancy from others. To assist in providing staff the opportunity to make the most informed decision, on Monday August 30 Catholic Charities New Hampshire is offering a Question and Answer session with Dr. Michael Gilbert to assist in their decision-making process. Individuals who choose to resign will be eligible for re-hire when they become vaccinated. We are pleased to report very few individuals have chosen resignation and we wish each of them luck with their new journeys.

On Monday the FDA approved the Pfizer vaccine which initiated a domino effect. Many individuals and organizations were waiting for FDA approval, some for reassurance and others to mandate the vaccine. Many large companies have begun mandating COVID-19 vaccinations as a way to help maintain a healthy workforce and community. Wal Mart, McDonald’s, Delta Airline and numerous other companies have initiated various mandates. As more companies and groups outside of healthcare mandate the vaccine unvaccinated individuals may find themselves contemplating vaccination status versus preferred career status. Although it is possible for vaccinated individuals to contract COVID, symptoms are typically less severe, last for a shorter duration of time and prevent unnecessary hospitalization which allows individuals with other significant health ailments access to medically necessary interventions.

COVID-19 boosters are not immediately available for all individuals at this current time. A very selective group of individuals have received a booster (no one at STV), Coos County Family Health has stated the electronic health record is used to identify individuals who are severely immunocompromised and would benefit from a booster. We do not have additional information to share regarding boosters and potential mandates/recommendations.

Lastly, a special thank you to Paula Poirier for volunteering her time to paint a vacant resident room. Her excellent work and assistance are greatly appreciated, the selfless act will be enjoyed by many.

Kindly,

Jeffrey Lacroix

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