



March 19, 2020

Dear Hospice families:

As our world and local community confronts the COVID-19 pandemic, the health and safety of our patients, families, and staff is always our top priority. Our Leadership Team is meeting daily to remain on the forefront of this crisis, regularly receiving updates from federal, state, and local agencies, and is responding to all recommendations and directives as appropriate. *Though response protocols are rapidly evolving, we assure you that CareFirst is committed to continuing our provision of extraordinary support and care to anyone receiving our services.*

Communication is important to maintaining stability and a sense of calm during this pandemic. Therefore, it is important that we update you on some of the steps we have taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic so far:

General

- ✓ Focused priority on safety, infection control, and universal precautions protocols
- ✓ Implementation of a remote workforce to ensure business continuity while complying with social distancing recommendations and directives
- ✓ CareFirst offices will remain open, with all visitors being screened upon entry; anyone with known contact with persons who are suspected or positive COVID-19 or exhibiting respiratory symptoms or fever will not be permitted to enter the building
- ✓ Infection control stations are established throughout the building
- ✓ Team meetings to be facilitated via web conferencing whenever possible

Patient Care

CareFirst is committed to providing extraordinary, compassionate support and care to our patients and families, no matter where you live. Considering the current social distancing restrictions, the provision of your care may require creative approaches to care. These include:

- ✓ On days of scheduled visits, clinicians will call your family to ask CDC recommended screening questions to assess risk prior to visits
- ✓ Utilization of phone call assessments and counseling when possible
- ✓ Potential usage of telehealth
- ✓ Collaboration with pharmacies to increase length of prescriptions for stable patients
- ✓ Collaboration with partner hospitals and facilities to implement necessary protocols that prioritize the safety and comfort of our patients and their loved ones
- ✓ For our hospice patients, Volunteer assignments are suspended indefinitely

Events

- ✓ All Reflection and Remembrance events are suspended until further notice
- ✓ All fundraising events are suspended until further notice
- ✓ All community events/groups who meet at CareFirst are suspended until further notice

We understand that this is already a stressful time for you, without the COVID-19 pandemic. Please remember that although this pandemic requires CareFirst to implement creative access to care, our staff remain committed to supporting you – while minimizing risk during moments of crisis.

There are several things you can do to support a healthy home environment:

- ✓ Stay home if at all possible; consider using online grocery delivery, if possible
- ✓ Limit visitors to the home
- ✓ Insist all necessary visitors wash their hands or use sanitizer upon entry into your home
- ✓ Practice regular hand washing and sanitization of frequently used items in your home, such as door handles, phones, remote controls, etc.
- ✓ Please have clean areas where CareFirst staff can wash their hands during visits
- ✓ Remain in communication with your care team; notify your team if you display a change in symptoms, increased pain or anxiety, etc.

Above all, remember that CareFirst is your partner in care. We are here to support you. As this pandemic evolves, we will continue to be on the forefront and will update you as necessary. Should you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact your care team at 607.962.3100.

Thank you for trusting CareFirst with your care. It is an honor and privilege to be by your side during this stage in life and you can trust that CareFirst will be here to provide the extraordinary support and care you expect from us.

Sincerely,



Jeff Yockavitch
Chief Executive Officer