



Dear Patients and Families,

Auburn Crest Home Health and Hospice is actively monitoring the progression of the coronavirus, COVID-19, to ensure that we have the most accurate and up-to-date information on the threat of the virus. As you are aware, this situation continues to be fluid and fast moving, as new cases are identified in the surrounding areas.

While most cases of COVID-19 are mild, causing only fever and cough, a very small percentage of cases become severe and may progress particularly in the elderly and people with underlying medical conditions. As this is a large portion of the population we serve, it is important that we implement additional safety precautions to protect our staff, patients and families.

We are closely following the recommendations and updates from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Idaho Department of Health, the County Health Department, the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization, Home Care Association of America and other agencies and resources. Therefore, we are implementing the following:

Continuing Processes and Procedures

1. We have an emergency preparedness plan in place. We will continue to follow it as this situation evolves or update it accordingly.
2. Our caregivers always have personal protective equipment including face masks, gowns, hand sanitizer and gloves available for their use, provided by our agency.
3. All caregivers will continue staying home when sick.
4. For patients we serve who reside in facilities or assisted livings, we will continue to work closely with the facility on any protocols, exchange of information, or other guidelines as necessary.

Additional Screening, Safety and Protective Measures

1. Our clinicians will be reviewing each scheduled visit to determine whether it is essential to be done in person, or if it would as effective if done by telephone.
 - a. Nursing must see each patient a minimum of every 14 days, with any change in condition and at death of a patient.
 - b. Social workers and chaplains will complete their visits by telephone and make home visits only if deemed essential.

- c. Hospice aide visits will be reviewed and determined whether they are essential to the care and safety of our patients.
2. This will be discussed with each patient and family to ensure the needs of our patients are being met, together with providing the best protection for staff, patients and family.

We Will Continue to Have our 24 Hour on Call Services Available to you and Your Loved one

1. We have added an additional precaution of each staff member who will be visiting patients, including screening prior visiting patients, as follows:
- a. Have you traveled internationally within the past two weeks?
 - b. Do you have any signs or symptoms of respiratory infection: cough, sore throat, fever or shortness of breath?
 - c. Have you been in contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19?
2. We have added a screening tool that will be used by the clinicians prior to providing care for each patient. This includes:
- a. Identifying high-risk patients at every new admission and appointment.
 - i. Upon admission, pre-screen all new patients and their families using the CDC Screening questions:
 - Have you traveled internationally within the past two weeks?*
 - Do you have any signs or symptoms of respiratory infection: cough, sore throat, fever or shortness of breath?*
 - Have you been in contact with anyone who has traveled to an area with known COVID-19 cases?*
 - b. Prior to making a visit, screen patients via telephone for signs of infection: fever, cough, sore throat and SOB.

Contingency Planning for You or Your Loved One

We strongly recommend that our patients start to plan for alternative arrangements for the provisions of care in the event we are unable to provide services. We encourage you to begin considering and putting into place back-up plans now, as the severity of the spread of this illness and planned interventions is still uncertain.

What You Can Do to Protect Yourself and Your Family

1. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
2. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
3. Limit visitors and avoid close contact with people who have traveled internationally in the last 14 days or who are sick.
4. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
5. Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces. Ensure you have both sanitizing wipes (with alcohol or bleach) and sanitary wipes (wipes for personal cares) available for use.
6. Have a family emergency preparedness.
7. Stay at home and away from others if you are feeling ill.
8. Avoid public gatherings of 20 or more people or other places outside the home.
9. If possible, keep at least 3 feet between you and others.

The safety and well-being of our patients, their families and our staff are of the utmost importance to Auburn Crest Home Health and Hospice. We will continue to keep you updated with new developments.

Sincerely,

The Auburn Crest Home Health & Hospice Compliance Team