15 March 2020

**Corona virus (Covid-19) update for Bryn Edwin Home**

After the weekend and loads of queries and questions, we would like to assure you of the following:

1. We will continue at the moment with our policy to keep all non-essential visits to a minimum, and we would like all next of kin to adhere to our visiting policy of 1st degree relatives visiting. We are waiting for the government to issue their guidelines, but we are sure that they will ask all people over the age of 70 to self isolate and stay at home.
2. We also understand that it is a very difficult time, and all the uncertainty is not helping, but we have to consider the elderly and those residents in the highest risk group. At Bryn we want to follow a cocoon policy as much as possible.
3. For those returning from abroad, please remember that you were on a flight with strangers from places we don’t know where. Franco and I have stopped visiting the homes because we feel the risk of travelling through the countryside and being exposed at service stations is too high a risk. If Franco does visit, he will not enter the building unless it is an emergency. We will be focusing during this time on the outside areas that need care and attention.
4. We are taking residents temperatures now three times a day. We are hoping it will give us a very early indication of an infection and that we can act appropriately and in the right time.
5. We will inform all of you if a case is suspected at our home. The same if someone does test positive for the virus. The protocol we will follow at the moment is to self-isolate the resident in his or her room. The carers will wear protective clothing, which will be double bagged and discarded with medical waste after their duties are done.
6. We will be as sensitive as possible to the situation and visits from loved ones if that were the case. Please adhere to our infection control policies and please respect the seniors and manager in their decisions.
7. We strongly recommend not taking any of the residents out to town. We strongly feel the risk is just too high and not worth taking. Not for the resident nor the others in the home.
8. Staff will be asked to self-isolate as soon as they feel the symptoms of Covid-19. We will welcome them back as soon as they feel better and have passed the 7-14 days of self-isolation. Hopefully, and as research shows up to now, they will have immunity and in a perfect position to care.
9. Please respect our carers and direct all questions they can’t answer to the manager or me. The carers will work long hours under immense stress and we want to assist them as much as possible to get through their long shifts. My email is anne-lotte.venter@hotmail.com. Please cc Amanda as well brynedwin@amber-group.co.uk and vice versa.
10. The manager, seniors, administrator and provider will have a daily morning meeting to assess where we are and change the plan as things get better, or worse.
11. As the meeting this afternoon for residents and next of kin have been cancelled, I will forward a report outlining our plans for the new financial year and try to answer as many questions we have received so far. Please use the addresses above to send any other queries.
12. Please register to use the Relatives Gateway app. Karen is very well trained to help you set it up.

Yours in Bryn Edwin and care

Anne-Lotte Ricotta

Director of Operations

Handy websites for information:

<https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

**Previous updates:**

As per our previous circular on the Covid-19 situation we would like to update our staff and next of kin on the plan going forward as from today. This is in line with the daily advice from the NHS, World Health Organisation and Flintshire County Council, but also from the management team of Bryn Edwin on how to keep our residents safe.

At the moment we know that the elderly are at the highest risk of dying from the Corona virus. From statistics from China, Iran and Italy 14% of the deaths reported were people 90 years and over, 42% were people in their 80’s. Men are dying more than women and those with high blood pressure at a significant higher risk of being critically ill.

Although last year’s flu season was linked to 1700 deaths in England alone, scientists are of the opinion that this is just the beginning for the UK. The fatality rate for the common flu is 0.1 per cent, but for Corona virus it is 0.7 per cent.

It is for this reason that Bryn Edwin Hall will enter a period of ‘cocooning’ our residents. Officials worldwide reckon that it is a proven method of keeping those with high risk or mortality safe till herd immunity has been achieved.

Herd immunity is when so many people in a population have already had a virus – and become immune to it as a result – that the illness stops spreading because there are not enough potential victims for it to infect and move through.

From today, Bryn Edwin will follow the following guidelines:

1. only allow visits from relatives that have a first degree relationship, for instance children and spouses of our residents
2. We will have access to residents via Whatsapp, Facetime or Skype calls for those who have to self isolate. We will release more information on how this will work as soon as we have a dedicated mobile phone in the home with the senior on duty
3. visitors will have to abide by our infection control policies, for instance hand washing and keeping a safe distance from others in the home where ever possible
4. Visitors will have their temperature taken when they enter the building. All staff will have the same procedure and our resident’s temperature will be taken with every medicine round.
5. Please use our Relatives Gateway App to be kept up to date with care given and received. Karen is the perfect person to help you through the process if you are not on the system yet.

The next of kin and relatives meeting of the 16th of March is cancelled, and we will send a detailed report of the progress made in the home over the last year, changes in the service provided and the reasons why. All next of kin are more than welcome to send in questions and we will answer those as best as we can between us all.

Public Health England has issued the flowing guidance, and we want to emphasize the need for all linked to Bryn Edwin to adhere to the sound advice:

1. Do not leave your house within 7 days from when your symptoms start, however mild
2. Stay at least 2m away from people whenever possible
3. Wash your hand regularly for 20s using soap and water
4. Stay away from vulnerable adults such as the elderly

The NHS and health officials are expecting the spread of the virus to peak over Easter, and last for about 9 weeks. During that time we have an action plan in place to cope with the expected illness of residents and absence of staff.

In the eventuality that the virus spreads in our county uncontrolled we will self isolate the home and only allow for emergency personnel and our own care staff to enter and visit.

We expect emergency rooms to be overflowing with cases and Bryn Edwin will start moving residents around as to create sections of the home that could be considered a self isolation area. We will start with rooms 1-7 depending on the number of cases, and we will use the entrance at room 1 as a main entrance for doctors and nurses and care staff. The residents who contract Corona virus will be moved into this area with the lounge as day space.

We are asking for next of kin to be very patient in this case as we are protecting those who have to move from contracting the virus. We promise to do this with the utmost care and consideration.

At the moment Bryn has a staff compliment of 35, of which 11 are auxiliary staff. At the very worst we are expecting 60% of the care staff to be in self-isolation. Self-isolation is expected to last 14 days, so for a worse case scenario like that all care will have to be done by 10 healthy care and 4 auxiliary staff members. We will revert to basic care actions – personal care, continence care, medicine administration, feeding and food and basic housekeeping.

All our staff is trained in all the mandatory areas of care, and in such a worse case scenario all job descriptions will revert to the above. So you might see a cleaner to do personal care, and a carer taking the washing out. It will be all about the tasks that need doing instead of who does certain tasks. As our food is prepared off campus, we do not require a cook position and all staff are trained in the correct procedure of heating and cooking the meals for our residents. All staff is trained in food hygiene and all residents have a Nutritional Risk assessment updated monthly.

At a certain point we will ask the manager and the administrator to work from home as per the guidance of the government. With our digital Person Centred Software this is possible, and all residents care plans can be updated remotely. The PCS dashboard is also updated constantly during the day and can be monitored constantly for the status and welfare of our residents.

We will update the above as per government instruction and our own action plan. The outcome we are aiming for is as many healthy residents and staff as possible, and keeping all safe.

Yours in Bryn Edwin and care

Anne-Lotte Ricotta

Director of Operations

Handy websites for information:

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