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Landis Communities Update August 3, 2021

Landis Communities continues to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on residents, clients, team members and families. Throughout the pandemic, we have been committed to transparency and frequent communications to address the ever-changing guidelines and the questions and concerns that arise because of them. The update today is regarding the delta variant and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendation to once again wear face coverings.

The delta variant has been a concern for the past weeks and is contributing to the rise in cases across the United States. Between June 19 and July 23, 2021, COVID-19 cases increased approximately 300% nationally, followed by increases in hospitalizations and deaths, mostly among the unvaccinated, driven by the highly transmissible delta variant (CDC.gov).

“The delta variant is showing every day its willingness to outsmart us and to be an opportunist in areas where we have not shown a fortified response to it,” CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky said in a briefing July 27. “COVID-19 continues to present many challenges and has exacted a tremendous toll on our nation.”

An article entitled “Five Things to Know About the Delta Variant” published on yalemedicine.org shared the following:

- Delta is more contagious than the other virus strains.
- Unvaccinated people are at risk.
- Delta could lead to ‘hyperlocal outbreaks.’
- There is still more to learn about delta.
- Vaccination is the best protection against delta.

Infections in fully vaccinated people (breakthrough infections) happen in only a small proportion of people who are fully vaccinated, even with the delta variant. Moreover, when these infections occur among vaccinated people, they tend to be mild. However, preliminary evidence suggests that fully vaccinated people who do become infected with the delta variant can be infectious and can spread the virus to others.

As was shared in the July 28, 2021, Landis Communities report, the CDC updated their guidance to include recommendations regarding wearing masks indoors when the area in which you live or are visiting is experiencing Substantial or High transmission of COVID-19. **As of August 2, 2021, Lancaster County moved to the Substantial Level of Community Transmission.**

Given Landis Communities efforts throughout the pandemic to follow CDC recommendations in order to keep residents and team members safe and healthy,



we are asking all residents to again wear masks when indoors in public areas such as hallways and other public spaces. Team members and guests have continued to wear face coverings in public settings but now we are encouraging everyone, regardless of vaccination status, to wear a mask.

Landis Communities has closely monitored the Lancaster County COVID-19 positivity rate and referenced it in regard to reopening guidelines across our campuses. The new measure, the level of community transmission, is based on either the positivity rate or the number of new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 people in a county. These metrics provide an accurate picture of how much the virus is spreading around us. Each county is then given a measure of low, moderate, substantial or high. If you are interested in learning more about a particular location, go to the CDC's website and search by state or county.

The CDC also recommends that communities and organizations refer to the factors in this graph to layer prevention strategies. Landis Communities is responding to this direction.



In summary, to reduce their risk of becoming infected with the Delta variant and potentially spreading it to others, the **CDC recommends that fully vaccinated people:**

- Wear a mask in public indoor settings if they are in an area of substantial or high transmission (which Lancaster County is as of August 2).
- Fully vaccinated people might choose to mask regardless of the level of transmission, particularly if they or someone in their household is immunocompromised or at increased risk for severe disease, or if someone in their household is unvaccinated.
- Get tested if experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
- Isolate if they have tested positive for COVID-19 in the prior 10 days or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
- Get tested 3-5 days after exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and wear a mask in public indoor settings for 14 days after exposure or until they receive a negative test result.
- Continue to follow any applicable federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations.

The **CDC recommends unvaccinated people** wear a face mask, stay six feet away from others, get vaccinated, avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces, wash hands often, cover coughs and sneezes, clean and disinfect, and monitor health daily.

Across Landis Communities at this time, mask wearing indoors, regardless of vaccination status, is our next layer of protection to keep residents and team members safe. We will continue to watch and learn about the Delta variant and will communicate any additional prevention strategies. **Until further notice, masks should be worn when in community or shared spaces indoors with the exception of sitting at a table eating or spending time in the pool.** Masks continue to be a requirement in our licensed care areas.

If you have any questions or wish to sign up for one of our vaccination clinics held the first and third Thursday of the month between 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. in the Phoebe Pharmacy, please contact Jenny Sheckells by calling 717-381-3573 or emailing jsheckells@landis.org.

Healthcare and Personal Care at Landis Homes as well as Welsh Mountain Home must continue to follow the guidelines of the CDC, Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services because they are regulated areas. Many factors affect visitation at these locations, so it is important to check the posted guidelines before each visit.

Thank you for your continued patience and grace as we navigate the evolving COVID-19 protocols. We ask residents, clients and team members to remember the Landis Communities guiding values of joy, compassion, stewardship, integrity and community as we care for and protect each other.

Residents, clients and family members may contact Jenny Sheckells with questions or concerns at jsheckells@landis.org or 717.381.3573. You may find other communications and videos on our website: www.landiscommunities.org/COVID

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