4/18/22

Hello Hospice Care Volunteers,

**Following CDC and VHD guidelines, please follow the current safety protocols below:**

**CDC guidelines for Health Care Personnel (HCP):**

• Hospice patient-care volunteers are considered HCP because the clients we visit are seriously ill (see CDC definition below).

• The CDC safety guidelines for HCP are more stringent than those for the general public. (Example: the CDC just shortened the recommended isolation time after a COVID infection for the general public, but for HCP it remains as it was).

**Vaccinations/Boosters:**

• Only vaccinated (and boosted) hospice care volunteers are permitted to visit clients face-to-face.

**Monitor Symptoms**:

• If you have COVID symptoms, *STAY HOME and get tested.* Call your Care Coordinator if you receive a positive COVID test.

• Before each visit, call your client to ask the COVID screening questions (see attached).

**Testing:**

• PCR tests are the most reliable, but it can take 1-3 days to get results and must be scheduled in advance now. Antigen (rapid) tests are thought to be effective for determining when an individual is infected and able to transmit COVID, but availability is limited. We do not have a supply of these for volunteers. Check your pharmacy and the State: https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/testing

• See *Testing Guidelines for Hospice Volunteers* (attached).

**Masks:**

• Wear N95 or KN95 masks *ONLY*; we have a large supply of N95’s at the office.

• We need/expect clients (and their household members) to wear masks while you are visiting, *if your client can reasonably do this*.

**Isolation/Resuming Visits:**

• If you tested positive for COVID and are *mildly symptomatic* or *asymptomatic,* before resuming volunteer visits:

o self-isolate for 10 days from the appearance of 1st symptoms (or 7 days with a negative test within 48 hrs before resuming visits)

o ensure at least 24 hours have passed since last fever *without the use of fever-reducing medications*

o ensure that symptoms have improved (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)

• If you were **exposed** to someone with COVID and are *asymptomatic*, you may resume volunteer visits after receiving 2 negative tests (on day 2 and 5-7\*). o \**To calculate day of test: consider day of exposure as day 0*

**We honor and appreciate the support and care you give our clients. Please bear with us as we navigate the ups and downs of this pandemic. We always welcome your questions, concerns, and feedback.**

**With Warmth and Fondness, (despite my cranky business-like tone), And Heartful Gratitude,**

**Patty (on behalf of the BAH Staff and Board)**

**CDC Definition of Healthcare Personnel (HCP):** HCP refers to all paid and unpaid persons serving in healthcare settings who have the potential for direct or indirect exposure to patients or infectious materials, including body substances (e.g., blood, tissue, and specific body fluids); contaminated medical supplies, devices, and equipment; contaminated environmental surfaces; or contaminated air. HCP include, but are not limited to, emergency medical service personnel, nurses, nursing assistants, home healthcare personnel, physicians, technicians, therapists, phlebotomists, pharmacists, students and trainees, contractual staff not employed by the healthcare facility, and persons not directly involved in patient care, but who could be exposed to infectious agents that can be transmitted in the healthcare setting (e.g., clerical, dietary, environmental services, laundry, security, engineering and facilities management, administrative, billing, and volunteer personnel).