

Barchester Healthcare Ltd,
Third Floor,
The Aspect,
12 Finsbury Square,
London,
EC2A 1AS

Date: 9th January 2021

Dear residents, patients and relatives

Happy New Year. We hope you managed to have a safe and festive holiday period, and could spend time with close family where possible.

We are very conscious that the recent Government announcements regarding the position on COVID-19, and the consequence of restrictions on how we are able to live our lives is not good, but we want to reassure you that, here at Barchester, we are feeling very optimistic about 2021, although we understand that being patient is key, and we hope that you feel the same.

We were delighted to hear the news over the Christmas period of the Oxford/Astra Zeneca vaccine being authorised by the Medical and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) which was described as being a 'game changer' in the fight against the pandemic, and for the rollout of the vaccination programme in primary care. As we're sure you are aware this is expected to be much easier to administer logistically than the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine and our staff, residents and patients are already undertaking vaccinations using either products authorised by MHRA, as and when they are called upon. As you will have heard through the Government announcements, social care and particularly care home residents and staff, are a priority for vaccinations which means that there is light at the end of the tunnel, and we are hopeful that the programme will be rolled out quickly, to help keep our residents, patients and staff protected, and as safe as possible.

Our current position is that 19% of our residents and patients have already had one dose of vaccine, and over 23% of our staff, and some are on their second dose already. This is increasing every day as the ramp up of the vaccination programme develops. This is such an important milestone, and once again our staff are stepping up to the challenge of supporting our residents and patients in receiving this. In addition we are very proud that they are taking personal responsibility in getting vaccinated themselves as soon as is possible, and we continue to be very thankful for the great care, ongoing commitment and passion to protect both themselves and our residents and patients, that they continue to demonstrate.

In the meantime we are continually testing both residents, patients and staff on a very regular basis with PCR tests being used every 28 days for residents in England, Wales and Jersey, and every week for staff in all of our services, along with an additional two Lateral Flow Device tests for staff every week too. Whilst it is recognised that the Lateral Flow Device tests are not as accurate, in conjunction with the PCR tests which are very accurate, they are an added level of information that can help to limit transmission, and we are very supportive of that, particularly with the knowledge of the new, more transmissible variant of COVID-19 that is now circulating

throughout the UK. In addition we are also ensuring that all health professionals that enter our services to support vital care do so with a recent negative test result. Currently we have just under 2% of our residents and patients who have COVID-19, and we continue to do all we can to care for them and protect all of our residents and patients through the implementation of our stringent infection control protocols.

We are conscious that right now the whole of the UK is living within very restricted measures, and whilst the recent Government announcements allowed for window visits, and visits to our visiting suites to continue, this is subject to local Public Health sign off. Therefore our staff in our services are working hard to understand whether they are allowed to continue with this so please bear with them as they go through this process. They are very aware of how important this is to you but, as we're sure you appreciate they must comply with the local Public Health guidance. Unfortunately, we are sorry to say that for our services in Jersey no visiting is allowed, unless this is for a compassionate visit at end of life.

Rest assured there is lots for our residents and patients to enjoy this month. They will be immersing themselves in the music of both Elvis and Mozart to celebrate their birthdays. There is also World Religion Day where our homes will discuss all religions and connect virtually to spiritual groups in their communities, and we also have the famous Burns Night celebrations at the end of January, where our teams will plan a Scottish supper, listen to his famous poems and enjoy some whisky tasting activities.

As always we will continue to do all we can to keep you updated but please don't hesitate to contact us with your queries and concerns, or your gratitude and thanks, and we will continue to do our best to respond as quickly as we can. You can do this through the General Manager or Hospital Director, or through our team at Feedback@barchester.com. Our only ask is that you do this with kindness and courtesy to the teams that are doing their very best to help, and we know you will.

Sending our very best wishes to you and your families.



Dr Pete Calveley
CEO Barchester Healthcare



Julia Atherton
Director of Nursing

We are sending this with the best intentions and with the latest data we have. If this causes offence we are deeply sorry.

