

## **United Zion's Weekly Update May 6, 2020 Transcript**

[Sue Verdegem] My name is Sue Verdegem, I am the CEO for United Zion Retirement Community.

[Ellen Haupt] I am Ellen Haupt, I serve as the Administrator for Skilled Care at United Zion Retirement Community. We would like to provide you with an update on the impact of COVID-19 on our skilled care facility.

[Sue Verdegem] In early March of this year, United Zion put into place our pandemic response plan. This plan followed all guidelines from Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The plan among other things included: eliminating visitors, except in extreme cases; stopping group activities and group dining; and screening all team members and vendors when they enter and leave campus. We were, also, screening residents each shift for COVID-19 symptoms

[Ellen Haupt] Over the past two months, our team members were vigilant in protecting the residents. If they were ill for any reason they would talk with Primary Care Providers to see if they would recommend COVID-19 testing. We welcomed the testing as we saw it helping to keep the residents of United Zion safe. Team members generally felt better before the test results came back negative.

[Sue Verdegem] During this time, we were also monitoring the precautions and guidelines of CDC and the Department of Health and adjusting our pandemic response as guidelines suggested to seek to keep COVID-19 from the residents of United Zion.

[Sue Verdegem] Mid-April, in a very short period of time, our lives changed when three staff persons tested positive. The first staff person had little resident contact. The other two team members worked with residents in skilled care. We immediately intensified the observations for the residents those team members had contact with.

[Ellen Haupt] Saturday, April 25 we received notification of two residents who tested positive for COVID-19. Immediately, we increased the infection control precautions for these residents and residents who had rooms near them and for residents who we felt may be showing symptoms.

[Sue Verdegem] We are pleased to now have to have consultation available to us from ERCI, the state health department's infection control consultant. They have validated the approaches we have taken and are taking to manage the outbreak. We are also receiving PPE (personal protective equipment) from the Department of Health.

[Ellen Haupt] We are working with our Medical Director daily to determine the best treatments available for residents with the virus. What are we learning?

[Sue Verdegem] We are learning what the national media is telling us is true – the virus is highly contagious. It is generally mild for younger people such as our team members, but can be more difficult for seniors. It effects each person differently. We see people with a first symptom of loss or smell, some with a cough, some with a mild fever. Each person is different. The recovery is different for each person, some are very sick; some are not and appear to pass through the virus quickly.

[Ellen Haupt] We are also learning what an amazing staff team we have. Today is National Nurses Days. We have all seen in the last two months how great our nurses are – Today we

honor them. We also expressing our sincere appreciation to every team member – from Dining, Housekeeping, Life Enrichment, Maintenance, to the Receptionist, all work tirelessly to keep residents comfortable. We know we work with True Superheroes.

[Sue Verdegem] Ellen, in addition to being a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator – you are also a Registered Nurse – Happy Nurse's Day. Thank you for what you are doing. We also appreciate the residents of United Zion and their families who are supportive of the work the team is doing. We appreciate the community who is supporting us through words of encouragement and gifts. We are deeply touched by the outpouring of support.

[Ellen Haupt] We recognize Mother's Day is this weekend. We understand how hard this Mother's Day is with the inability to visit. If you would like to arrange a Facetime meeting with your mother please reach out to Zach Souders in Life Enrichment. You may also drop-off gifts, flowers, etc. at our screening location at the main entrance for us to deliver to your family member. Please drop off gifts a few days prior to when you want them delivered so that we can organize and sanitize them.

[Sue Verdegem] We want to conclude by again expressing our thanks to residents, families and the community during these difficult times.