



May 19, 2020

Dear Bane Care Families:

To be honest, I don't have a lot of "new news," which is itself a positive development. We have settled into a mode of intense compliance with the regulatory oversight I referenced last week, and that intensity is required, as much of the guidance changes frequently. So we have to be, and are, on our toes. More globally, the Commonwealth has announced the beginning of a reopening plan, which is also certainly positive.

What we don't know yet is when nursing homes will "open up" and by opening up, I mean when can we allow visitors back in. CMS, the Federal regulator of nursing homes, came out with general guidance yesterday, and while the guidance is broad and intended to be administered on a State specific basis, this is an important first step. The main criteria established by the guidance includes the requirement of broad testing of residents and staff, which as I shared with you last week is being implemented in MA as we speak. In addition, protective equipment including masks and gowns will be likely part of the rollout, at least for the first phases of allowed visitation. This is a work in progress, but I wanted you to know that not only is this on our minds, but our regulators are working on it as well. The obvious question is – when? I wish I had an exact answer, but the general answer, at least as far as I am concerned, is as soon as possible, if not the millisecond after we get the greenlight from regulators.

In the meanwhile, most of you are already taking advantage of the remote visitation options we have available, such as FaceTime and Zoom, and I am pleased to share that we have been awarded a grant from Mass. DPH for expanding our equipment of tablets. We hope that grant is funded soon, and when it is, we will have the new tablets available in all of our facilities.

If you have been following our daily updates you have seen a significant reduction in the number of positive cases (residents and staff) across our buildings, and we have celebrated many residents' recoveries and, in some cases, return to home. It has been uplifting. I also want to share with you that eight residents across our 11 facilities passed away from COVID last week, and while there is never good news in reporting this, that number continues to decrease as well. We mourn these losses and send our sympathies to the families who loved them and to the staff who cared for them. I look forward to the day when I can tell you that number is zero. I am hopeful that day will come soon.

As we look to the future, you may have seen information about a group which is gathering signatures to put an initiative on the November ballot to support proper funding for nursing homes. We have supported that initiative, and if you are interested in learning more, and possibly supporting the effort by adding your signature to the petition, here is the link: <https://www.maseniorcoalition.com/support-our-seniors>.

In closing, on behalf of our incredible staff, I thank you for all of your kind words, gestures and good wishes. We share every letter and every thank you with our team, and they appreciate your gratitude. Please be sure to check our website at www.banecare.com for frequent updates.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rich C. Bane".

Rich Bane