From the Administrator, Emily Straw

We hope you enjoy our newsletter. We have some wonderful introductions to make for you as some of our leadership team members have changed. You will also be able to view some statistical data about our resident and staff vaccination rates and you will see what we have planned for Nursing Home Week!

In the meantime, I wanted to share the most recent Covid-19 protocols. As our county cases have dropped significantly at the time of this writing, we are extremely pleased to have things feel a little more “normal” around here. However, we have struggled with the enforcement of the protocols still required by both the state and the federal governments.

MDH has not provide an update to the Visitation Guidance since November, so we are still required to enforce screening in, mask wearing and social distancing. Any guest visiting a resident should remain inside the resident’s room. While there is no number of limit on guests, the space being utilized needs to support social distancing. So for the average resident room 3 guests is the maximum we could accommodate while following those protocols.

*Simply put this is what visitors should be prepared to do when visiting:

Screen in. Write your name, number, time and date of visit, and the resident you are visiting. This is needed for contract tracing in the event of an outbreak.

Take your temperature and write it on the screen in form.

You are attesting you are free of any covid symptom by answering the rest of the questionnaire.

If you have symptoms, you should not enter. Instead, reschedule your visit for another time.

Put on a surgical mask at the entrance. Our setting does not allow use of cloth masks.

Keep your mask on for the duration of your visit. If you and your resident are vaccinated you can take the mask off inside the residents room if the resident consents. However, you must wear it when in the corridors or public spaces, even if it is just entering and exiting the facility.

Visitors should stay inside the residents room and not move about the facility, with the exception of getting to and from the room.

Visitors may not use common spaces like dining or commons unless they have received additional education and there is no outbreak.

Large gatherings in communal areas like dining rooms or pods are not permitted.

We do not allow families and residents to hold large gatherings on the pods and we do not want guests to wander about the facility. They should enter the residents room directly and leave the facility, limiting the foot traffic among the facility and therefore reducing the potential of spreading.
We can provide a private space for residents and their families if they want to gather for birthdays or other special events. However, the space is limited so advanced planning is required. Additionally we only have two areas that are equipped for this purpose. Call Activities at 218-683-8106 if you would like to plan something.

As the weather gets nicer, any outdoor activity is considered normal, so families are encouraged to take their loved ones outdoors, where air ventilation and sunshine do not contribute to the spread of the virus.

We understand that the protocols can be difficult for some to follow, especially with decreased Covid-19 activity. However, we are still serving and protecting a vulnerable population and working through a Covid-19 outbreak in our setting is extremely difficult for both residents and staff alike and we plan to avoid it at all costs. If there is anyone who is not able to abide by our protocols, we would respectfully ask that they not visit. If someone is found out of compliance they will be asked to leave. I appreciate your cooperation and understanding.

Respectfully

Emily

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From the Culinary Department:

My name is Patty Wojciechowski.

I came to work at the care center in August of 2021 with experience in cooking, food handling, food ordering and kitchen management.

I hold a state license as a Certified Food Protection Manager, and I am currently enrolled in the Certified Dietary Managers course through UND.

I was previously employed at a local K-12 school for 9 years.

I started working there casually the dish room and as opportunity opened up I took the steps, and worked my way up to Food Service Director for 7 years.

Food Service has been a large part of my life, and I enjoy it.

I am married and I have a young child at home.

When I am not at work I like to grow flowers, grow a vegetable garden, fish, camp, cook and bake and I like to travel as time allows.

The Thief River Care Center is a wonderful place to work and I am proud to be a part of such competent team of coworkers.

Since August, some of the improvements that have been made are: a fully staffed dietary department and I have been able to bring back the Ala Cart menu for the residents, so they have some control over what they would like to eat for meals. The Ala Cart menu is intended to provide a menu of items that are always available to residents during kitchen hours as snacks or substitute menu items.

Currently, I am working with our food distributor to create fresh new menus, and soon to come, we will implement an evening of Fine dining, once a month.

I also meet with Resident Food Committee once a month and take suggestions from the panel for ideas to put on the menus.

Also soon to come, will be a special Resident Choice lunch menu once a month.

I look forward to learning all I can, and working with everyone towards the goal of happy and satisfied residents.
From Social Services, Kristina Stenson

My name is Kristina Stenson and I am the Social Services Director for Thief River Care Center. I moved to Thief River Falls in July 2020 from Superior Wisconsin where I studied Social Work at the University of Wisconsin – Superior graduating with a Bachelor in Science and a Certificate in Mediation and Conflict Resolution. When I am not at work I am typically at home with my family or traveling.

Infection Control, Sheryl Payne

It has been an exciting several months with COVID testing, a couple of outbreaks, and then the Norovirus. Always interesting.

We have made good strides in getting our residents vaccinated with only 2 unvaccinated, making a 96% vaccination rate among residents. Our staff rate is 73%, but 100% have either been vaccinated or approved for a med/religious exemption.

We are proud that we have had such a good reception to the different mandates that the CDC and MDH have had us follow because for the most part, we were able to keep most of our residents in the facility.

I hope that our spring and summer bring us the relief that we really need from the stressful times that we have just gone through.

Bingocize:

Bingocize is an evidence-based 10-week program that combines a bingo-like game with exercise and/or health education. Program goals are to improve and/or maintain mobility and independence, learn and use health information focused on falls reduction and other health-related behavior, and engage older adults in social settings. The proven outcomes are to improve lower/upper body strength, gait, balance, and range of motion. Also improve aspects of cognition, increase social engagement, improve knowledge of falls risk reduction and other important health topics.

We just finished our first 10 week program with 10 residents completing the course. 5 of the 10 want to continue on the next course as they really felt improvement over the weeks. We will be inviting 5 more residents to join us with the next program. They participate 2x/weekly for an hour. The first one was exercise only and the next one will be fall prevention.
2021 was again a very difficult year for all of us. Activities had to change along with our COVID situation. We continue to give as much time as we can to all our residents and now can gather and be out of the rooms. Also encouraging residents to wear masks outside of rooms.

We are trying to get our residents more active again following the time spent in rooms and are having fun with ball drumming, fitness fun, rec games and bingocize. We enjoyed our in house Santa, Jeff Mercil and celebrated the New Year!! We had a winter beach party and now looking forward to being out on the patio as it warms up and eventually doing some planting. At this point all outdoor activities are encouraged with no COVID restrictions, but indoor visits are still in rooms only. This week we enjoyed the Easter traditions of egg coloring, deviled eggs, crafts, music, egg hunt and will have an Easter worship service in the chapel.

Coming up in May we are celebrating Nursing Home Week with some fun activities for everyone. Please call Lori at 683-8106 or email me with anything I can assist you with.

Facebook page
Have you seen the Thief River Care Center Facebook page? It is: https://www.facebook.com/pages/Thief-River-Care-Center/764125646936404 or just click on .
Family Council:

The Thief River Care Center supports the development of a Family Council. The focus is on education, encouraging family to air concerns or make recommendations and to promote support for families.

The next Family Council meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday May 4th at 4:00pm** in the Conference room here at the Care Center. Please provide me feedback if there is a better day/time that works for you and we will try and schedule accordingly. Thank you!

Wishing you a bright, warm and beautiful spring!

Sara Stedy:

We applied for a grant through Enbridge in Thief River Falls and were awarded $2,500 to purchase a non-motorized standing aide, which is designed to help residents increase their participation both during transfers and for standing, strengthening and endurance training.

Enbridge is Fueling Futures by collaborating with community leaders like TRCC. Together they are energizing communities through initiatives that strengthen community safety, vibrancy and sustainability. Enbridge is proud to support local priorities that make positive and lasting impacts in our communities.
Care Center Companions !!!

We are always looking for volunteers who would like to spend some time with residents and staff to enhance the lives of our residents. We have some great volunteers that I can’t thank enough. If you have some new, fun ideas that we could share with our residents please contact Lori at 683-8106 or email at lathompson@trcc.sfhs.org

Employees of the Month:

These employees were Caught in the Act of Kindness as they were working as a team player with the other staff and completing their work as well. They are hard workers and have kind hearts. We are lucky to have them as employee at TRCC.

Please fill out Caught in the Act of Kindness forms to thank staff who do the little extra things that make the Care Center that special place. The forms are at the nurses stations.

Remembering our friends:

Eileen Frigard       Delphine Mongoven
John Bjerken         Beverly Holm
Eunice Grove         Marguerite Barth
Hulda Sigerud        Wendell Teigland
Nathalia Orpen