



NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Division of State Operated Health Facilities

ROY COOPER • Governor

MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH • Secretary

KODY H. KINSLEY • Deputy Secretary for Behavioral Health & IDD

HELEN WOLSTENHOLME • Division Director

March 10, 2020

Dear Family Members, Guardians, and Visitors,

At NC DHHS, our first priority is the health and wellbeing of those we serve. Now that 5 new cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in Wake County, NC DHHS and the Division of State Operated Healthcare Facilities is taking immediate action to slow the spread of this outbreak and protect those in our care.

At this time, the best way to reduce the spread of the virus is by limiting exposure. **For that reason, unfortunately, no visitors will be permitted into our facilities, effective immediately.** In exceptional circumstances, visitation may be permitted following consultation with the Facility Director and DSOHF Central Office. We understand that not being able to visit your loved one can cause great anxiety. Facility staff will work hard to keep you updated and to support the use of phones and other technology to connect you to those in our care.

Caring for the patients and residents in our facilities is a responsibility we take seriously. The individuals we serve include those that are at high risk for more severe complications from this disease. Limiting visitation is a proven way to protect all of our patients and residents. Thank you for helping us keep everyone safe. In addition to limiting visitation, we have also implemented other practices, such as screening all staff for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 each day they come to work.

Regarding statewide status of COVID-19, please know that NC DHHS infection disease experts have been working hard to prepare, and there is a large coordinated effort underway among local, state, and federal partners. Everyone should protect themselves and others by taking the everyday preventative actions you would take to prevent the spread of any respiratory illness, such as cold or flu:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Stay home when you are sick
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue away
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using regular household cleaning spray

NC DHHS recommends that people at high risk of severe illness from COVID-19 should avoid large groups of people as much as possible. This includes gatherings such as concert venues, conventions, church services, sporting events, and crowded social events. People at high risk includes people over 65 years of age or with underlying health conditions including heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes, or people with weakened immune systems.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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Get the facts by reviewing the most updated information at www.ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus or by calling 866-462-3821. If you have facility-specific questions, please reach out to the social worker that is working with your loved one.

We will keep you updated and will restore visitation as soon as it is safe to do so.

Sincerely,

Helen Wolstenholme