

April 23, 2020

Dear Beatitudes Residents and Families,

I am sure you have heard all the media surrounding COVID-19 in nursing homes and long-term care facilities. It breaks our hearts that older adults who live in these communities as well as staff have contracted this disease, and many have succumbed to it. Residents and families across the nation are growing more concerned about whether they or their loved ones can be kept relatively safe and families are worried that they will not know what is happening in the community. I am writing to tell you that I pledged to you a month ago that Beatitudes Campus would be transparent during this unprecedented health crisis and I want to assure you that I will continue to inform you on what is happening at the campus during this ever-changing time.

Beatitudes Campus and communities like ours face a heightened risk for serious illness due to the age of our residents, many of whom have chronic and complex conditions, functional limitations and trouble thinking. Most of our residents in the Health Care Center and in Assisted Living and some in our Independent Living community require person-to-person interactions, such as getting out of bed, bathing, dressing and eating. As social distancing is the best tool to prevent the spread of the virus, social distancing isn't always possible in all scenarios.

Our highest priority is preventing the coronavirus to enter the campus and spread, and we have implemented the strongest precautions we can. Early on, we cancelled all group activities and closed our communal dining areas and started delivering all meals to our residents. We screen every staff member, healthcare worker and essential visitor, vendors and delivery people, as well as residents who are returning to campus following a healthcare appointment for fevers and symptoms of COVID-19 (cough and shortness of breath, as well as travel outside Arizona) before they step foot onto the campus. Beatitudes Campus instituted a lockdown of our Health Care Center and Assisted Living community early in the crisis, followed by a no-visitation policy in Independent Living, and almost two weeks ago instituted a full lockdown for our Independent Living community.

Infection control is a major focus of attention across campus. In addition to screening everyone who sets foot on campus, we have heightened our sanitation procedures throughout the common areas of campus and in our Health Care Center and Assisted Living. We have a robust schedule of cleaning all hard surfaces, community doorknobs, doorknobs on every apartment in every building, light switches and elevator walls and buttons. In our Health Care Center and Assisted Living areas, we have five staff who specialize in infection control and who have major responsibility for management of infection prevention and surveillance and for ongoing training of staff and housekeeping in infection control.

Additionally, Beatitudes Campus has created an isolation unit on the third floor of the Health Care Center, which will be used for residents who are returning from a hospital stay and may have potentially been exposed to COVID-19 or for residents who show symptoms (fever/dry cough) before they are tested. These residents will require a 14-day monitoring/isolation period for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. This isolation area will be protected from other areas in the Health Care Center and will have dedicated staff who volunteered for this duty and who will only work with those residents. This is being done to help minimize possible exposure should anyone present with positive symptoms.

In addition to the isolation unit, we have constructed a designated COVID-19 Unit in the Agelink Building on the east side of Beatitudes Campus. This unit will be used for residents and community members who have been actively treated during a hospital stay for COVID-19 and are stable enough to be released from the hospital, but who will still require additional time with nursing care. If anyone who is in the Isolation Unit would test positive for COVID-19, we would immediately move them to the dedicated unit in the Agelink building. The COVID-19 Unit is awaiting approval from the Arizona Department of Health Services.

Our health care teams in Assisted Living and the Health Care Center have the personal protective equipment (PPE), like masks, face shields, gowns, gloves that they need to stay safe and keep our residents safe. Using PPE will be determined based on guidance from the CDC and state health officials. The health care teams have received specific training on how and when to use PPE. Supervisors practice with staff the procedures for putting on and properly disposing of PPE as part of our ongoing focus and commitment to staff competencies and infection control. All of our employees from front-line staff to the president and CEO are wearing masks in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Arizona and Maricopa County health guidance.

Because of the tight controls we have throughout the campus to keep our residents safe and at home, **we realize that social isolation can present challenges for our residents. Beatitudes Campus is a strong proponent of person-directed care and prioritizes connection with friends and family as a key area of well-being.** We encourage our residents to reach out to family and friends and we have dedicated tablets to help residents connect by phone and/or video calls should they desire. We communicate information to our residents through various ways: through the Beatitudes Community Channel, which is broadcast 24/7 into every apartment and through letters that we place outside the door of every apartment. In addition, David Ragan, senior vice president of resident services, and I hold a daily telecast, which is accessible on the community channel and on our YouTube channel. More than 100 YouTube videos have been created that include informational videos on staying healthy, fitness and exercise sessions, spiritual life programming and current information. **We created a website (BeatitudesCampus.org/Beatitudes-Family)** with information and resources for family. Additionally, we are texting and emailing families with the latest information. **We set up a special email address (BeWell@BeatitudesCampus.org)** for families and residents to ask questions, state comments, get clarification on policies.

Beatitudes Campus is fully staffed at all levels for nurses, aides and support staff. The campus has taken extra precautions to ensure that we do not experience a shortage in staffing levels. Beatitudes Campus has approximately 450 employees and approximately one-fourth of them are nurses, CNAs, aides, dietary specialists and life enrichment specialists. Our support staff are cross-trained and will be deployed to assist with all non-healthcare related duties, such as delivering meal trays, passing out water, assisting with activities and other similar tasks so that no area of care is short-staffed. All of our staff have been educated about COVID-19, with particular attention paid to resident and staff safety. Our priority is to ensure that the health and safety and social needs of our residents are met. Additionally, should we ever experience a shortage of staff, Beatitudes Campus has long-standing partnerships with temporary staffing agencies to provide quality healthcare and staffing support.

New regulations just passed this week from the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) underscore Beatitudes' commitment to transparency. These regulations require nursing homes and assisted living communities to inform residents and their families of any COVID-positive residents or staff. We support this effort across the board as it supports our pledge that we made to you from the beginning. Beatitudes Campus will share information not only from our Health Care Center and Assisted Living areas, but also from our Independent Living community. As regulations pertaining to coronavirus are ever-changing, we will keep you informed.

I sincerely hope that some of the "behind the scenes" information in this letter will assure you that Beatitudes Campus' top priority is the safety, health and well-being of you and your loved ones with whom you entrusted to be part of the Beatitudes community of residents. We are doing everything we can do – and more – to keep our residents and staff safe and well. Although coronavirus is an unprecedented new and virulent virus, I have outstanding confidence in the Beatitudes team who is leading this fight and in the guidance I have received from federal and state authorities, Arizona LeadingAge, the professional organization for life plan communities and from colleagues across the country. We will get through this crisis and come away with new processes and procedures that will make Beatitudes Campus better and more innovative in the long term.

Thank you for trusting us to care for you and your loved ones. We are #BeatitudesStrong!

My best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle L. Just". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michelle Just, President and CEO