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Main Office  
6101 Montrose Rd. Ste. 203  
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Dear Families,

SmithLife and our leadership is dedicated to ensuring the safety of all our clients and staff. As the Director of Nursing and Administrator, my main objective is to ensure client safety through education, communication and continuous improvement practices. We at SmithLife Homecare would like to share our illness policy and infection control steps that are in place to aide in keeping everyone as healthy and safe as possible. The Coronavirus is currently a topic of importance at this time, so we would also like to provide additional information to help increase understanding this illness. SmithLife hopes that sharing our illness policy, infection control steps and additional information on the Coronavirus, we can assure you of our focus on health and safety.

Caregivers as well as Clients do become ill. We understand that it is often unplanned, and sometimes inconvenient. It is important to know that no staff member is to report to work if they are ill. Many illnesses are contagious, and we must be careful to avoid unnecessary exposure to our clients and co-workers. Caregivers may be part of multiple care teams, caring for more than one Client in their respective homes. It is our responsibility to protect all our Clients, our Caregivers and their families. My experience as a nurse has taught me that when a person begins to feel ill it could mean a lot of things some minor and some not. For this reason, if someone has or suspects that they have a contagious illness they should stay home until it is resolved. Paid Sick Time is available for all caregivers to use if needed. Examples of symptoms or illness that would prevent a caregiver from being allowed to attend work are as follows, but not limited to:

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Pink eye
- Virus/Bacterial Infection
- Contagious rash
- Significant pain (ex. broken bone, injury)

All Caregivers are trained and reminded of infection control guidelines. This includes proper hand washing techniques, understanding the use of Personal Protective Equipment, PPE, to prevent the spread of contagions. This can include things such as gloves or a face mask. The number one thing that we all can do to prevent the spread of bacteria and germs is to practice proper handwashing.

Considering the current outbreak of Coronavirus in Montgomery County, MD, we are asking that each Caregiver is overly cautious. The Caregivers will not report to work if they have a fever and must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to work. Paid Sick Leave is available for all of our Caregivers, so there is no reason for them to go to work while ill. As a guideline, we are asking that if there are any ill persons in the home and a medical professional has deemed that they may be at risk, tested, or quarantined for possible exposure to Coronavirus, to notify SmithLife Homecare as soon as possible. Please read the following information to learn more about how it spreads, prevention, and symptoms.

### **How Coronavirus (COVID-19) Spreads**

When the coronavirus spreads person-to-person the Center for Disease Control (CDC) believes it happens mainly through droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.



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## Symptoms

For confirmed COVID-19 infections, the illness ranges from people being mildly sick to people being severely ill. Symptoms of COVID-19 may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after exposure. If ill with these symptoms, go to a hospital emergency room or call the state health department. Symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath, difficulty breathing

## Prevention

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19 infection. CDC always recommends these actions to help prevent the spread of the virus, including:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. • Stay home when you are sick. • Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw it in the trash.
- Clean frequently touched objects and surfaces with household cleaners as the virus may live on surfaces.
- The CDC does not recommend wearing a mask if you are well.
- Avoid shaking hands.

CHAP Abstracted from CDC.gov information Feb 29,2020

Sincerely,

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