

# **Duke Dementia Family Support Program**

## **Caregiver Connections**

**An Educational Webinar Series With The Experts**

**The presentation will begin shortly.  
Thank you for your patience!**

**[dukefamilysupport.org](http://dukefamilysupport.org)**

**919-660-7510**



# Who is

- Independent
- Non-partisan
- Statewide
- 501(c)(3) non-profit organization
- Established in 1987 in response to the need for reform in long-term care here in NC



# Why does FOR matter?

- We stand on the frontlines for rights...the right for quality of care/quality of life in long-term care
- Our mission is to empower residents & families to improve quality of care through education, advocacy & support







# Where does NC Rank?

- NC Ranks 44<sup>th</sup> out of 50 states regarding Nursing Home Care from Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) data (2019)

# CovID-19 Testing



- NC DHHS announced testing for LTC staff in August 2020
- CMS requires testing for nursing home staff
- NC Senior Living & NC Assisted Living Association have received funding for both staff testing and PPE
- No requirement to test visitors; however some facilities are using rapid-tests
- If you tested positive for covid, you may be required to provide a doctor's note before you can enter the facility



# Why universal testing is critical for LTC

- Part-time positions
- Not paid living wage
- No benefits
- No sick time
- Work 2-3 jobs
- High turnover rate
- CMS investigation of Kirkland, WA facility (epicenter of COVID outbreak in USA) stated sole cause of outbreak was staff working at more than one LTC facility

# LTC Visitation



**ENABLE VISITATION IN LONG TERM  
CARE FACILITIES**

**#VISITATION  
SAVESLIVES**

*Residents have not seen their families for over 100  
days. The impact of social isolation is devastating.*



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# Current Visitation Guidelines

- NC DHHS Secretarial Order No. 6: Visitation for Long-term Care Facilities issued September 28, 2020:
- Visitation is now permitted for indoor visits, immediately.
- Visitation is now open to anyone, from families/caregivers to ombudsman to geriatric care managers to clergy members.
- There are NO restrictions unless there is a reasonable safety or clinical cause to not allow a visit.
- Compassionate care has been expanded explicitly to include multiple other reasons besides someone who is at the end of life.

# Visitation Guidelines

- Secretarial Order No. 6 (9.28.20)  
<https://files.nc.gov/covid/documents/Secretarial-Order-6.pdf>
- Guidance on Visitation, Communal Dining and Indoor Activities for Larger Residential Settings (updated 10.16.20)

“Visitation should be person-centered, consider the residents’ physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being, and support their quality of life. Visits should be conducted with an adequate degree of privacy. By following a person-centered approach and adhering to the core principles below, visitation can occur safely. “

<https://files.nc.gov/covid/guidance-on-visitation-communal-dining-indoor-activities-for-larger-residential-settings-oct-16-2020.pdf>

# Essential Caregivers



- MVP – Most Valuable Person for residents in Long Term Care
- Family member/Close friend (does not have to be blood relative) selected by resident who has access to visit resident, care for resident, advocate for resident, no matter an outbreak
- This is to eliminate the pandemic of social isolation the lockdown of long-term care in NC caused residents
- Residents Rights do not end because of public health outbreaks



# Technology Gaps in Ltc

- COVID-19 has exposed the need for additional technology in NC's LTC
- Many facilities still only have (1) telephone for the hall or wing of a building
- LTC facilities don't have WI-FI bandwidth
- LTC facilities don't have laptops or tablets for virtual communication
- Technology is needed for:
  - Keeping families/caregivers connected to LTC residents
  - Keeping State of NC Ombudsman connected to LTC residents
  - Keeping Adult Protective Services (APS) connected to LTC residents



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# Connection Matters

- Video chat, FaceTime, text, and email with family and friends outside of the facility.
- Set up Skype, Zoom, or FaceTime so residents can communicate with each other within the facility.
- If facility staff assist in setting up equipment, request that they leave the resident's room, so socializing can be done privately.
- If the resident doesn't know how to use the technology, ask local libraries or senior centers to provide training via phone call or video chat.
- Ask family and friends to send short video greetings that residents can watch at any time. Residents can record videos to send in response.
- Use the facility's Contact Us page on their website as a way to contact residents.
- Set up a video chat or live stream where residents and family members can share best practices for communicating, keeping active, and self-care strategies.
- Create a phone chain for family members and friends to call on a scheduled day to make sure the resident is getting daily phone calls.
- Use the facility's social media channels to invite others to become pen pals with residents.

(From: <https://theconsumervoice.org/events/2020-residents-rights-month/staying-connected>)

# FOR (Friends of Residents in Long term Care)

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**QUALITY  
LONG TERM  
CARE**