



Hart Care Center, Inc.

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To our Patients and Family Members:

We are very concerned about the increase in COVID-19 cases across the state and in our local community in recent weeks. The information from Centers of Disease Control (CDC) indicates the Delta variant of COVID-19 has become the most prevalent strain of the virus in our state and has been the cause of the rise in the number of positive cases nationwide. Rates of county positivity are located on our website.

Data from the Department of Public Health Weekly Report for this week shows that 11 Georgia counties are now in the red classification of an outbreak, 118 counties are in the yellow classification and 30 are in the green classification. We expect these numbers to get worse, not better if we are not all diligent in doing our part. Our county is currently in the yellow classification which means we are testing our staff weekly. We are also continuing our vigilance with infection prevention practices throughout our center.

As we continue to learn more about the new "Delta" variant, we are adjusting our plans and working diligently to protect the safety and wellbeing of our patients and staff. To reduce the spread and impact of COVID-19, we continue to follow guidance from the CDC and the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). We are staying in close communication with local and state health officials to ensure we are taking the appropriate steps under the current circumstances.

While scheduled visitations will continue, we **STRONGLY** recommend all visitors wear a face covering during visits. Visitation will remain limited to **two** visitors. We will also continue to offer rapid testing for all visitors prior to the scheduled visit. Please notify staff when scheduling your visit if you would like to be tested upon arrival.

As we see the cases rise in Georgia, it is important for all of us to remain diligent in following the recommendations by the CDC. This includes getting vaccinated. The facts are clear. The COVID-19 vaccine saves lives. Vaccinated people are rarely hospitalized or die from COVID related complications. Therefore, we continue to encourage and offer the vaccine to our patients and staff. Currently, the acceptance rate among our patients is 88%. We continue to partner with our pharmacy and local resources to make the vaccine available for our associates and patients.

We also recommend if you haven't already, that you get vaccinated to protect yourself and your loved ones. The vaccines are proven safe and effective. Millions of people in the United States have received the vaccine under the most intense safety monitoring in U.S. history. If you are fully vaccinated, to reduce the risk of being infected with the Delta variant and possibly spreading it to others, wear a mask indoors in public if you are in an area of substantial or high transmission. If you are fully vaccinated and exposed to someone with COVID, the CDC recommends you be tested for COVID 3-5 days after exposure. If you are unvaccinated, we ask you to remain vigilant in the steps you are taking to protect your own health by avoiding crowds, practicing social distancing, washing your hands properly, wearing a face mask when you are in close contact with others, and monitoring yourself for any signs and symptoms of illness.

We know you may have questions about the vaccine and/or the rise in cases. We encourage you to contact us with questions and concerns. Please call us at (706) 376-7121. You may also visit our website HartCareCenter.org for updates.

The safety of our patients and staff is our top priority.

Cole Meeks

Administrator