

May 27, 2021

Residents of Greater Cincinnati,

The past 14 months have been nothing short of difficult for our nation and our world. In our region, we consider ourselves lucky to have many amazing healthcare organizations, providers, and facilities. This benefit to our community has likely never been more visible and appreciated than throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Much has been written and publicly shared about the tremendous collaboration between community agencies, hospitals, and health departments in responding to COVID19. While this collaboration has been extraordinary, it was and is supported and strengthened by the unsung heroes of this pandemic - our area nursing homes.

There are more than 11,830 residents in 171 facilities across Greater Cincinnati in nursing homes today. These nursing homes – and assisted living communities – are a necessary part of the healthcare system and our community. Especially during COVID-19, with our elderly population being disproportionately impacted.

Those who care for these residents, provided love and companionship, when families could not. And this care was extended in new ways throughout the COVID-19 pandemic as staff and caregivers creatively provided interaction and care for their residents during strict visitor restrictions implemented by the state for safety reasons.

Cards, entertainment, personal visits and even a kind and gentle touch – these were all intentional efforts that our nursing home and assisted living caregivers provided to patients when family visits were not permitted. Here are just a few of the ways our nursing homes have helped us respond to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- 100+ facilities convened by The Health Collaborative have been meeting on a consistent basis, continually monitoring the changing rules and best practices provided by the State and CDC, with the aim toward a common goal: preventing the spread and managing outbreaks of COVID -19. They have been successful in “flattening the curve,” and avoiding the overloading of acute care facilities while preventing COVID-19 spread among their residents.
- Nursing Homes have helped every acute care hospital in our region to manage the surge of hospitalized COVID-19 patients throughout the pandemic. Greater than 90% of nursing homes developed special isolation units within their facilities to assure their own residents could return to them without jeopardizing spread to others.
- In addition, approximately 15 nursing homes developed the ability to accept COVID-19 positive patients who were not their original residents. This much-needed safety net of about

250+ nursing facility beds helped hospitals place patients that had COVID-19 and were ready for discharge but could not return to their usual place of care. This provided necessary relief for the hospitals to be able to care for the sickest COVID-19 patients.

To all the unsung heroes in every area of healthcare, including our region's nursing homes and assisted living communities, thank you for being there when families and loved ones could not.

Thank you for answering a special call to care for those in their most vulnerable times. And thank you for all you have done throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

On behalf of a grateful region, we thank you.

Sincerely,

Atrium Medical Center, Premier Health

Bethesda Butler Hospital

Bethesda North Hospital

Good Samaritan Hospital

Kettering Health Hamilton

Mercy Health – Anderson Hospital

Mercy Health – Clermont Hospital

Mercy Health – Fairfield Hospital

Mercy Health – West Hospital

St. Elizabeth Healthcare

The Christ Hospital Health Network

The Jewish Hospital – Mercy Health

UC Health