



## **HERITAGE SPECIALTY CARE RESPONSE TO DES MOINES REGISTER APRIL 8, 2020**

Heritage Specialty Care (Heritage SC) in Cedar Rapids has recently experienced numerous positive tests of Covid-19 for both residents and staff. Since March 10, Heritage SC has implemented government recommended enhanced infection control measures to limit visitors to the building. Since March 24, when we were notified of our first two positive Covid-19 cases, we have been in daily communication with the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) and Linn County Public Health. We've worked collaboratively to implement and follow health agency recommendations.

For most healthcare providers their work is personal to them. This been the case for the employees at Heritage Specialty Care (Heritage SC) in Cedar Rapids as they provide care for our residents in these very difficult times. Our frontline employees at Heritage SC are persevering after two-plus weeks of fighting off Covid-19. Through it all they have galvanized as a team to go to work each day to support each other and more importantly, to be there for the residents who need them 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week. We are grateful for the compassion our employees show and the dedication they demonstrate each day for our residents. We are also mindful of the stress this situation puts on residents and their families. To that end, we are doing our best to keep the residents and families informed.

As for questions pertaining to past Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals (DIA) reports being reviewed by the Des Moines Register, we find absolutely no distinct, related connection between the information contained in Heritage SC's DIA reports and the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic that has now reached Iowa. To cite those matters would be misleading and inappropriate. As recently as last week, the DIA conducted a special remote Covid Infection Control Survey with Heritage SC using the critical element pathway related to Covid-19. The DIA found zero deficiencies with our infection control policies or measures.

Considering the quick worldwide and nationwide spread of this virus, we should take a moment to praise the efforts of the long term care community in Iowa that only three long term care centers out of nearly 450 in Iowa have more than three Covid-positive tests. We continue to coordinate our infection control efforts with IDPH and Linn County Public Health.

Heritage SC currently has a federal government "quality" rating of 4-stars out of five. Any infraction Heritage SC has received in the past is factored into the government's current ratings. While there is always room for improvement, we are confident in the quality of the thousands of personal care interactions our employees have with our residents daily. The safety and well-being of our residents continues to be our highest priority.

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