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Facial Coverings Policies and Procedures

Policy Statement

In accordance with the Florida Statutes §408.824 and the standards set forth in the Florida Administrative Code 59AER23-1 and -2, The Villa at Carpenters has adopted the following policy regarding the use of facial coverings for infection control by its residents, visitors, staff members and others coming into the facility.

Definitions

Common Area – refers to areas in a health care setting where residents are not treated, diagnosed, or examined.

Employee – refers to any person under employment or contract of a health care setting, including health care practitioners, administrative staff, maintenance staff, aides, contractors, students, and volunteers.

Facial Covering – means a cloth or surgical face mask, a face shield, or any other facial covering that covers the mouth and nose.

Resident – refers to a person receiving services from a health care practitioner or health care provider.

Sterile Areas – refers to locations where surgery is conducted or where procedures that require aseptic techniques are performed.

Sterile Procedure – refers to aseptic procedures with the goal of minimizing the risk of microbial contamination to reduce the rate of invasive or surgical site infection.

Visitor – refers to any person in a health care setting who is not an employee or resident of the health care setting.

Policy Interpretation and Implementation

1. The Villa at Carpenters does not require the universal use of facial coverings by persons to gain access to, entry upon, service from, or admission to the facility or otherwise discriminate against persons based on their refusal to wear a facial covering.
2. Persons who freely choose to wear facial coverings while within The Villa at Carpenters facility may do so based upon their personal preference.

3. Facial coverings remain an important intervention in preventing respiratory bacterial and viral transmission. The Villa at Carpenters and its health care practitioners may choose to require a resident to wear a facial covering only when the resident is in a common area of the facility and is exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has been diagnosed as having an infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission.
4. The Villa at Carpenters and its health care practitioners may choose to require a visitor to wear a facial covering only when the visitor is:
 - a. exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has a diagnosed infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission.
 - b. in sterile areas of the facility or an area where sterile procedures are being performed.
 - c. in a resident or clinical room with a resident who is exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has a diagnosed infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission; or
 - d. visiting a resident whose treating health care practitioner has diagnosed the resident with or confirmed a condition affecting the immune system in a manner which is known to increase risk of transmission of an infection from employees without signs or symptoms of infection to a resident and whose treating practitioner has determined that the use of facial coverings is necessary to the resident's safety.

Opt-out Requirements of 59AER23-2 when facial coverings are required.

1. The Villa at Carpenters will follow the regulations of 59AER23-2 for persons requesting to opt-out of wearing facial covering.
2. The Villa at Carpenters and its health care practitioners who choose to require a facial covering for any resident will provide for the opting-out of wearing a facial covering that is in accordance with the Florida Resident Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, section 381.026, F.S., including the following:
 - a. 381.026 (5) Responsibilities Of residents. - Each resident of a health care provider or health care facility shall respect the health care provider's and health care facility's right to expect behavior on the part of residents which, considering the nature of their illness, is reasonable and responsible.
 - b. 381.026 (4)(b)3. Rights Of Residents - A resident has the right to be given by his or her health care provider information concerning diagnosis, planned course of treatment, alternatives, risks, and prognosis, unless it is medically inadvisable or impossible to give this information to the resident, in which case the information must be given to the resident's guardian, or a person designated as the resident's representative. A resident has the right to refuse this information.

c. 381.026 (4)(b)4. Rights Of Residents - A resident has the right to refuse any treatment based on information required by this paragraph, except as otherwise provided by law. The responsible provider shall document any such refusal.

d. 381.026 (4)(b)5. Rights Of Residents - A resident in a health care facility has the right to know what facility rules and regulations apply to resident conduct.

3. The Villa at Carpenters and its health care practitioners who choose to require a facial covering for any visitor will provide for the opting-out of wearing a facial covering when requested by the visitor if an alternative method of infection control or infectious disease prevention is available based upon the individual resident's and visitor's circumstance.

4. As a health care provider, The Villa at Carpenters will allow an employee to opt out of facial covering requirements unless an employee is:

- a. Conducting sterile procedures,
- b. Working in a sterile area,
- c. Working with a resident whose treating health care practitioner has diagnosed the resident with or confirmed a condition affecting the immune system in a manner which is known to increase risk of transmission of an infection from employees without signs or symptoms of infection to a resident and whose treating practitioner has determined that the use of facial coverings is necessary for the resident's safety,
- d. With a resident on droplet or airborne isolation, or
- e. Engaging in non-clinical potentially hazardous activities that require facial coverings to prevent physical injury or harm in accordance with industry standards.