

DRAFT LETTER FROM MEDICAL DIRECTOR OF CARE

I am writing to you as medical director of Like all of you, I am deeply worried about our residents during the unfolding Covid-19 outbreak.

Very sadly, difficult decisions are going to need to be made soon. Under ordinary circumstances, we would send very ill residents to hospital, if that was already part of their care plan. This is going to become very difficult with the severity of this pandemic.

I have spoken to doctors at . The treatment options are limited to care for a surge of patients with Covid-19. They are also concerned about having Covid-19 brought into the hospital by infected patients.

It is possible that you may face the decision to send your loved one to the hospital, especially if they develop pneumonia and have trouble breathing. This would raise the question of going on a ventilator.

A frail nursing home patient who is put on a ventilator is quite likely to suffer a great deal, and may not survive. Artificial ventilation is an invasive procedure. The older and more frail a person is, the harder it is on them. If they survive, they are bedridden for quite some time after. This carries its own problems such as bedsores, incontinence and often permanent loss of mobility and of whatever independence they may have previously had.

I am asking all of you to think hard about what would be in the best interest of your loved ones. The hospital will of course still see them if that is your firm wish, and asks that we warn them and the ambulance before we send patients. That way, health care workers can take precautions to avoid getting infected themselves. Once we become infected, then just like everyone else, we must self-isolate for 14 days - meaning we will not be available to look after patients.

My heart goes out to you during this distressing time. Thanks for taking the time to read this.

Sincerely,