

UPDATE

OCTOBER 2021

Greetings,

Fall greetings! The change in seasons brings new hope and new challenges. As a new month dawns, we are hopeful that our residents and staff are learning to cope with the ever-changing – and challenging – landscape of COVID-19. In my long career as a long-term care Administrator, I have never witnessed the resilience, grit, and, sadly, exhaustion of a workforce so determined to bring joy and compassion to the lives of those in their charge. They constantly muster the strength to keep fighting against an invisible foe; it is inspiring. I witness the staff's refusal to admit defeat in conquering this seemingly unconquerable virus. I am honored and humbled to work alongside this amazing team of individuals.

COVID-19

Our industry-leading vaccine mandate went into effect in October. As a result, we can report that all staff working on our campus are now fully vaccinated! A further cohort of approximately 35 employees and 60 residents received a COVID-19 booster shot, administered by the Dept. of Public Health. We anticipate administering more booster shots to residents and staff as they become available to us.

A handful of COVID-19 cases made their way to German Centre at the end of September and into October. Fortunately, the cases were identified quickly, due to our active surveillance testing protocol. An isolation wing, with dedicated staff, was created to quarantine affected residents until they were fully recovered. All had been previously vaccinated and most presented with no symptoms of COVID-19. Those who were symptomatic were transferred immediately to the hospital for treatment.



On October 26, two surveyors – one from Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and one from Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health (DPH) – arrived unannounced at German Centre to determine if the facility was in compliance with Federal requirements related to implementing proper infection prevention and control practices to prevent the development and transmission of COVID-19. The survey revealed that German Centre was in substantial compliance with participation requirements and no deficiencies were cited. “This is one of the most detailed and tedious infection control surveys I have been involved with,” said Austin Azeta, Director of Nursing. “The DPH surveyor acknowledged the hard work and effort from the staff, and complimented all involved for a great job! This was truly a team effort.”

What's New

FLU SHOT CLINICS UNDERWAY

German Centre residents and staff are being inoculated against the flu on an ongoing basis throughout October and November. Last year, when COVID was at a peak, we encountered no cases of the flu due, in large part, to the aggressive hygiene and PPE protocols in place. If you have questions about getting the flu vaccine this year, visit the [CDC website](#) for more information.

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL PHYSICAL THERAPY MONTH

October is National Physical Therapy Month — a time to celebrate the profession and all the ways physical therapists and physical therapist assistants help improve lives across the country.

Our Physical Therapy staff: Sean, Sandra, Olga, and Cheryl have been hard at work helping those who come to German Centre following an illness or surgery, get back on their feet. We thank them for their dedication to helping others regain strength and mobility.



L-R: Physical Therapy Team: Sean, Cheryl & Olga. Not pictured: Sandra



CELEBRATING GERMAN TRADITIONS

Each year, residents of Edelweiss Village board our van to attend Oktoberfest at Boylston Schul-Verein in Walpole. This year was no exception. Guided by their fearless leader, Doris, residents enjoyed a beautiful fall day, complete with brats, beer, and music!

STAY TUNED

In November each year, Deutsches Altenheim has made it a priority to pay tribute to members of the US Armed Forces on Veterans Day. It's been our honor to host the community's veterans and friends as we gather to celebrate those who served their country.

This year, sadly, in lieu of the ongoing threat of COVID-19 in the community and the fragile health of aged adults, we have opted to mark the day with inspiring messages captured on video. The video will be posted to our website on/around November 11. With any luck – and a lot more vaccines – we will resume an in-person ceremony next year. On behalf of a grateful community, thank you, Veterans, for your service.



A Final Thought

The vaccine mandate, coupled with an exhausted workforce, has caused gaps in our staffing, which must be filled. If you, or someone you know, is a licensed nurse or certified nursing assistant, please send us contact details. By working in a senior community such as Deutsches Altenheim, you'll experience a rewarding career making a difference in the lives of seniors. Please share this message with those who can help.

Stay safe. be well and get vaccinated,

Michael B. Lincoln
Executive Director
German Centre