Aicota recognizes the critical role that family members, and other close caregivers, have in the care and support of our residents. We have established a process for designating appropriate Essential Caregivers (EC) for our residents. EC will be classified as an individual who was previously actively engaged with the resident and is committed to providing companionship and/or assistance with activities of daily living.

Any concerns with EC visits should be directed to:
Vicky White, Infection Preventionist
Email: vwhite@aicota.com
Phone: 218-927-2164

Or
Office of Ombudsman for Long-Term Care to request advocacy services
651-431-2555 or 1-800-657-3591

1. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
   a. All ECs are required to wear the same level of PPE for the visit that current staff are required to wear. At a minimum this includes a surgical mask and eye protection (eyewear must cover the front and sides of the eye area). PPE will be worn during the entire visit.
   b. The facility will have the required PPE available; if EC has their own, they are encouraged to provide.
      i. If the facility reaches low levels of PPE availability; EC visits may need to be suspended until adequate inventory is established.
   c. The facility will provide proper training on donning and doffing of PPE to ECs.
   d. If ECs fail to properly utilize PPE, they will not be eligible for future visits.

2. Screening Process for EC
   a. EC must go through our orientation training prior to their first visit. This will include review of proper infection control practices, screening, hand hygiene, use of PPE, visitation terms and triggers for suspending EC visits (see below).
      i. There will be a signed agreement on file for each EC.
   b. All ECs will enter the facility through the main entrance. Screening will take place prior to the visit starting.
      i. Screening will take place by facility staff.
      ii. There will be a sign-in log at the entrance.
   c. Hand hygiene and placement of proper PPE will take place before proceeding to the visit.

3. Scheduling of EC Visits
   a. All visits must be scheduled with the facility at least 24 hours in advance. “Walk-ins” will not be permitted. EC visits are available 7 days a week from 0800-2000. Hours & days may need to be adjusted.
   b. Visits can only be between the resident and the approved EC; the visit will not include any other residents in the facility. EC will limit movement within the facility during their
visit. EC must maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet with other residents and staff while in the building.

c. No more than one EC can visit a resident at a time.

d. Scheduled visits are limited to no more than three hours in duration.

e. Visits will take place in the resident’s room or in a private place. EC is allowed to bring resident outside for a walk. EC must wear appropriate PPE and resident to wear a face mask, as tolerated.

f. EC should not take the resident out into the community except for essential medical appointments that have been arranged with the facility.

g. If EC becomes ill during the visit with any of the screened symptoms; they must report to the facility and leave immediately.

h. Facility has a Guest Bathroom that will be available for use by EC. It will be cleaned on a more frequent basis.

4. Triggers for suspending EC visits

a. If at any time there is a concern about community exposures to COVID-19, or exposures of staff, residents or families to COVID-19 within our facility, we will be suspending this policy until further notice.

b. EC visits will not be allowed during a 14-day isolation period.
   i. Exceptions will be made for compassionate care visits.

c. EC visits will not be allowed if any resident in our facility is COVID-19 positive.
   i. Exceptions will be made for compassionate care visits.

d. EC visits may be restricted or revoked for individual ECs if communicated guidelines are not followed.

e. EC will need to monitor for screened symptoms for 14 days after their visit and notify the facility immediately if they develop any of the symptoms.

f. Visiting rights will be revoked for the EC if they are COVID-19 positive or are exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19, until one of the following criteria is met:
   i. Symptom-based strategy; visits will be suspended until:
      1. At least (24 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in symptoms; and
      2. At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

I agree that I have:

1. Read and understand this agreement,
2. Received the education packet,
3. Received the orientation training.

Signature of Essential Caregiver: ____________________________ Date: _______________

Educated by: ___________________________________________ Date: _______________