

Bridgewater Nursing Home & Rehabilitation Center

January 16, 2024

Stephen Davis, Director
Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Division of Health Care Facility Licensure and Certification
67 Forest Street
Marlborough, MA 01752

Via Certified Mail

RECEIVED

JAN 26 2024

MA Dept. of Public Health
67 Forest Street
Marlborough, MA 01752

Re: Voluntary Closure Notice of Intent
& Request to place Beds Out Of Service

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to notify the Department of Public Health of our intent to temporarily close the Bridgewater Nursing Home, located at 16 Pleasant St., Bridgewater, MA. The target date for closure is May 15, 2024. In accordance with the regulations for voluntary closure (105CMR153.023), enclosed please find a Voluntary Closure Notice of Intent and a Draft Closure Plan.

This is a sad day for us. As family owner-operators of small, home-like facilities for over 57 years, closing a facility is something we never want to have to do. My family has proudly operated this facility for 47 years since I purchased it in 1976. The facility has become well-known over these many decades for providing excellent care, dignity, and quality of life, to those in need.

Bridgewater Nursing Home is very small, with current census at approximately 22 residents, and there are vacant beds in the area, so we do not anticipate any issues with finding safe placement for each resident at a facility of her or his choice.

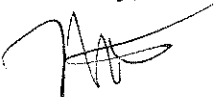
Our intent remains to replace the facility by construction of a new facility if and when market conditions ever allow for possible success in this sector.

We will greatly appreciate any guidance and assistance the department can give us in this closure process, as well as in obtaining approval for designating our licensed beds as temporarily out of service. Our hope is that with the coming inevitable bed shortage crisis, we will be able to rebuild and reopen with a replacement Determination of Need (DoN). at some point, and re-activate our license. We do have an approved DoN (Project #5-1291), to replace the facility, which we are hoping to update and reactivate with the state's approval.

Please call or email our Director of Operations, Gilbert Thisse (781)762-0703, gmthisse@rehabma.net, or the facility's Administrator, Andrea Collins, (508) 697-4616, ACOLLINS@rehabma.net, if you have or need any additional information.

Thank you for your assistance as always.

Sincerely,



Nicholas H Thisse
President

Bridgewater Nursing Home & Rehabilitation Center

January 16, 2024
Stephen Davis, Director
Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Division of Health Care Facility Licensure and Certification
67 Forest Street
Marlborough, MA 01752 (via certified mail)

Voluntary Closure Notice of Intent

To Whom it May Concern,

Please consider this letter a Notice of Intent to close the Bridgewater Nursing Home, located at 16 Pleasant St., Bridgewater, MA. The current census is 22 residents, and there are many vacant beds in the area, so we do not anticipate any issues with finding safe placement for each resident at a facility of her or his choice. Our residents may very likely find other facilities of their choosing prior to the closure date.

The **proposed date of closure** is May 15, 2024.

The **reasons for closure are as follows:** The facility is unable to continue operating due to inadequate government reimbursement. The elimination of 3-bed rooms is ultimately the reason this facility will be unable to turn around from its current financial situation, which has been operating with substantial negative margins for several years. We have always operated with a 43-bed license, but this rule eliminates 11 beds; over 25% of the facility's beds.

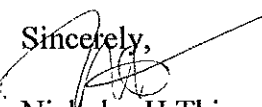
The facility does hold an approved Determination of Need for replacement, from the Department of Public Health, which we have been hoping to complete. Unfortunately, the reimbursement climate has not been favorable to undergo such a project, and has only worsened over time, since we obtained our DoN approval. Most recently, the building has reached a point where its continued operation is not competitively feasible without exercising the DoN, and the current inadequate reimbursement environment does not allow for that option. The facility's residents are predominantly covered by Masshealth, which does not reimburse the facility's cost of providing services. Therefore we have regrettably been forced to conclude that the temporary closure of the facility is necessary at this time. We intend to exercise our options, with the state's approval, to update and reactivate the above-referenced DoN approval, as soon as financial feasibility can be ascertained.

The **facility representative** whom residents, family members, staff, or other interested parties may contact regarding the proposed closure is Andrea Collins, the facility's Administrator. Ms Collins can be reached at the facility at (508)697-4616, or by email acollins@rehabma.net. Alternatively, Kerri Westgate, the facility's social worker, is also available at the facility, (508)697-4616, and will be actively assisting residents and their responsible parties with options.

A **draft closure plan** is included with this notice. Copies will be available and posted in the facility.

A **public hearing**, if required, will be held on the proposed closure at least 90 days prior to the proposed closure date. Interested parties may file comments on the proposed closure and draft closure plan with the Department of Public Health, up until the date of the public hearing.

Sincerely,


Nicholas H Thisse
President

cc: Office of State Long-Term Care Ombudsman; Old Colony Elder Services (Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman office)
Massachusetts State Senator Walter F. Timilty; Massachusetts State Representative Angelo L. D'Emilia;
Town of Bridgewater Board of Selectmen

Bridgewater Nursing Home

Draft Closure Plan – January 16, 2024

Steps to assist residents or their legal representatives in preparing for closure of the facility

1. Notification:

- Each resident's primary responsible party (family member, and/or legal representative) is being personally contacted by facility social workers to notify them of the facility's closure plan.
- Copies of this *draft closure plan* as well as the *notice of intent to close* are being mailed to each resident's primary responsible party.

2. Psychological preparation:

- The facility is holding meetings with the facility's Residents' Council to discuss the closure, including the reasons for closure and options for residents.
- The facility's contracted psychiatric service provider, Community Health Link, of Worcester, has a clinician visiting the facility at least weekly during the closure process. The clinician is already very familiar with each resident, and will be working with the facility social worker to provide individual counseling with residents as needed.
- Facility social workers in the building are available daily during business hours and will be working closely with each resident to ensure their psychological well-being.

3. Efforts to find alternative placements for all residents:

- The facility has a list of all nursing facilities in Massachusetts. Facility social workers will meet with legal representatives and/or families (and residents if capable) regarding appropriate, safe placement options. All efforts will be made to ensure that referrals are made to the most appropriate setting for each resident, in the best interest of the resident, to facilities that can meet all of their needs, and including the consideration of the resident's and family's choice of facility.
- Referrals will be made to qualified facilities in the order of each resident's and/or family's choices.

4. Family informational meetings:

- Initial meetings for all families will be held on Monday, January 29th, and Wednesday, January 31st, at 6:00 pm, in the facility's dining / activity room.
- Additional family meetings will be held as needed during the closure process.

Steps to be taken to assist facility staff in preparing for closure

1. Staff meetings are being held to discuss the closure, to review the closure plan, to discuss the options that employees will have, and to review benefits.
 - All staff will have priority for transferring to other sites within the company. We are confident that most employees will be offered positions at other locations.
 - Benefits and seniority will continue for employees who stay employed within the company.
2. Job fairs are being scheduled to ensure that employees are aware of their options, including unemployment compensation.
3. Facility administration and human resources staff is coordinating with the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance to ensure that each employee is aware of her/his rights and options, and to facilitate transition and / or unemployment assistance as needed.

Storage of Medical Records

- All medical records of discharged residents will continue to be catalogued and stored on-site, until the building is sold or re-purposed, at which time they will be transported to another company site or reputable professional records storage company, for safekeeping for the duration of applicable record retention periods required by state regulations.

Admissions of New Residents

- Admissions of new residents will continue until the facility is directed by the Department of Public Health to discontinue admissions. All potential admissions will be informed of our intent to close. All current residents who are admitted to the hospital for medical reasons will be accommodated and readmitted to the facility as required by state and federal regulations, unless they request and are accepted for transfer to a different facility from the hospital.