

Crescent Cove Respite & Hospice Home for Kids is a vibrant and joyful home-away-from home for kids with life-threatening conditions, where each moment is embraced and celebrated. It is located in Brooklyn Center, MN and provides 24/7 nursing care and integrative therapies for child 0-21 years of age. (Description of CC)

A Safe Haven During the Pandemic

Kathryn Koehne, RN – Director of Nursing & Operations

This story outlines the conservative, cautious and creative approach Crescent Cove has taken during the coronavirus crisis.

In last weeks of 2019, a virus made its appearance in a city 7000 miles away from Minnesota. Although, the unique and virulent characteristics of this virus were worthy of attention, a small city in China was not relatable in many ways. However, by early January news swept across the world that this virus was spreading rapidly and leaving many victims in its path. Although there was significant concern, the occurrence was a world away.

The virus became more threatening when the first case was diagnosed in the US and by mid-March the virus infected people in all 50 states. The leaders and staff at Crescent Cove vigilantly observed the data and followed guidance from public health experts and governmental leaders at the state and national level. Careful investigation, deliberation and discernment led the leadership and board of directors to make the decision to keep the doors open and continue to serve our children and families.

As a healthcare facility that cares for medically fragile children, there are already strict infection control standards in place. A decision was made to have only essential staff on the premise. This decision led to a cascade of other decisions. All in-Home volunteers would be on an indefinite hiatus. Some integrative therapies would be on a pause and music therapy would be offered virtually. The leadership staff would telework. The nursing assistants, nurses and house manger would remain as a core staff to ensure that care would continue – safe and secure.

Crescent Cove leaders and staff acknowledge that the world outside of the Home was whirling and swirling with uncertainty and fear. The predictability of life changed abruptly as cases of the virus began weaving closer to Home. However, we were committed to be a safe haven for our families and if needed, for the community at-large. The staff would carefully screen all who entered the Home - themselves, the families and children to keep our setting free of the virus.

Crescent Cove serves families and vulnerable children who face unpredictability every day. A sense of social distancing and isolation is part of their life. And they live not knowing when an unanticipated crisis may occur. The coronavirus added yet one more challenge. Knowing this, we wanted to extend support and reassurance. Crescent Cove did affix a sign on the door – “Closed due to Covid-19.” In contrast, we called families and said- “We are here for you.”

The nurses and nursing assistants have shared their perspective of life at Crescent Cove during the coronavirus pandemic –

Working at Crescent Cove through this pandemic has been nothing short of unique. In some ways it has been an escape from the worries of the outside world. Gina, RN

Work at Crescent Cove has been the highlight of my day because it involves seeing my work "family." During quarantine this has provided the most socialization available and pushed me to soak up each minute with both the kids & my co-workers. This has made us stronger. Allie, RN

A challenge has been wearing masks - I feel like our kids depend on our facial expressions SOOO much, and "smizing" isn't always enough to convey that we are happy and caring. Leah, RN

Working for me during the pandemic as the care coordinator and continuing to schedule kids means families still have respite and a break in this crazy time. I can still brighten a kid's day; they don't know it's a pandemic, they don't care, they are still wanting to have fun. Jenny, RN

Working at Crescent Cove during this pandemic has been a light in a dark time. I look forward to coming to work to not only bring joy to the children, but also fill my own cup by experiencing the joy, love and happiness of the kids who come to stay with us! Their paths have been paved with hills and mountains, yet they still only have an unconditional joy in their hearts and I think everyone needs to experience that positivity during this time and every day! Andrea, RN

I am able to see creative sides of people I hadn't seen before. Watching our team bring in their hidden talents in order to provide the same excellent, holistic care that we promise has been incredible! Whitney, RN

I love that we are being creative and embracing our new reality during the pandemic. I love that we are committed to making the best days ever even in a time of uncertainty and fear. I am so proud of our team, our brave kids, and families! Michaela, CNA

Some of the joys have been the little moments; rocking a child in the chair watching the sun rise and listening to the birds chirping in the moment. I have also loved getting to see and hear of all the creative ways the day staff have been engaging with the kids with dress up themes and camp outs! Michaela V, CNA

It has been amazing to see all of the creative things done to have fun activities for our children. Themed days, music therapy through Facetime, meeting their favorite character through videos... so many great ideas to make moments count and still keep our children safe. Hannah, CNA

I have been especially grateful to be working during this time. Knowing so many people are losing their jobs means that me having hours is something to be extremely appreciative for. And I am grateful that we've still been able to have respite patients come stay. Erika, RN