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Dear Media Partners,

Thank you for the important role you're playing in keeping our public informed and educated about COVID-19 in this unprecedented time. Your commitment to your audiences as news professionals is apparent and deeply appreciated.

The members of the Arkansas Health Care Association are focused on *our* vital role of fulfilling the ongoing mission of caring for the most vulnerable in our state. Our dedicated staffs are working tirelessly to care for residents in 252 long-term care facilities throughout Arkansas. At facilities most impacted, many caregivers are choosing to sleep at facilities between shifts to ensure patients have no interruption in care. Others are raising their hands to change assignments with fellow caregivers who are at elevated risk if exposed to the virus. They are acting with the highest level of compassion and professionalism and deserve all of our respect and appreciation for the care they are providing to the tens of thousands of residents we serve.

On their collective behalf, we are respectfully asking that members of the media refrain from visiting or being on the property of our facilities seeking footage or interviews without prior notice or coordination. Clinicians and staffs are focused on providing patients and residents with the highest level of care. Having media on property unexpectedly can distract from the important work at hand and cause undue stress on patients and families. We also ask that you please do not call facilities and tie up phone lines that need to remain open for medical providers and families needing updates.

To ensure the media's needs are met in the most efficient and official manner possible, we are coordinating all media requests through Kristen Nicholson, APR, at 501-350-3658 or the AHCA office at 870-215-8435.

As we hope our accessibility thus far has demonstrated, our goal is to answer media questions related to COVID-19 in long-term care facilities and provide access and up-to-date information while still maintaining directives from the Arkansas Department of Health and compliance with HIPAA and privacy laws.

Thank you in advance for honoring this request and for being respectful to the residents, clinicians and staffs of our long-term care facilities during this health crisis. If you have any questions, please contact me at 501-350-7496 or rbunch@arhealthcare.com.

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rachel Bunch', is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Rachel Bunch
Executive Director



AN AFFILIATE OF THE AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION