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April 30, 2020



To All Staff,

This is week four of our employee COVID-19 update.

**Status Update**

Each week we will provide you with updated information on COVID-testing at all of our campuses.

Testing Tracker: Summary of Employees & Residents Diagnostic Testing								
Employees		To date (since pandemic start)			New Suspected Cases			
	Employees tested	Tests Pending	Employees Positive	Employees Negative	Employees tested	Tests Pending	Employees Positive	Employees Negative
Chase	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
GSFH	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
GSVE	6	0	1*	6	1	0	0	1
			* last worked 3/29					
Residents		To date (since pandemic start)			New Suspected Cases			
	Residents tested	Tests Pending	Residents Positive	Residents Negative	Residents tested	Tests Pending	Residents Positive	Residents Negative
Chase	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
GSFH	7	0	0	7	1	0	0	1
GSVE	4	0	0	4	0	0	0	0
Tested as of 4/22/20					4/23/20-4/29			
Please note some testing was purely precautionary as the individual was asymptomatic. Ex: fall led to ER visit and tested.								

**Employee Screening**

We will be updating our screening questions, and we wanted to remind everyone about a few important items. Also, to affirm what is already in place, we wanted to let you know that you are all doing an outstanding job. We are here for you and we are grateful that you have been here for our residents.

As research on the virus develops, the CDC made six new additions to its list of COVID-19 symptoms this week to help us better understand who might be sickened by the virus. The newly added symptoms include:

- Chills
- Repeating shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New Loss of taste or smell

These new symptoms will now join the list of the other symptoms, which are part of our current screening questions: fever, cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing. Part of the screening will include questions as to if these symptoms are part of a chronic pre-existing condition.

### **New York State COVID-19 Emotional Support Helpline**

As a reminder, New York State has set-up an Emotional Support Helpline for healthcare workers and first responders on the front lines of the COVID-19 emergency. You can call the Emotional Support Hotline for help with anxiety, stress, depression, trauma, and grief. The number to call is 1-844-863-9314, 8am – 10pm, 7 days a week.

In addition to the NYS Hot-line, employees and their family members can also access up to 8 free sessions from our EAP provider, ENI. The number to call is 1-800-327-2255, we encourage you to take advantage of this benefit.

### **Mask: FAQs**

*Why should all staff working directly with residents or on resident units wear a surgical facemask and not a cloth mask?* Per the CDC, cloth face coverings are not considered PPE because their capability to protect healthcare personnel (HCP) is unknown. Surgical facemasks should be reserved for HCP. Also, per NYS DOH, use of cloth masks or other homemade masks (e.g. bandanas, scarves) for HCP is not recommended. It is unknown whether cloth masks provide effective source control for infectious patients. This link (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25903751>) gives the results of a previous study on the effectiveness of cloth masks vs surgical masks.

*When should staff wear N95 masks?* N95 masks are to be utilized for staff working directly with COVID positive or suspected COVID positive patients.

*Why is CDC recommending cloth face coverings instead of medical grade facemasks for most people?* Masks and N95 respirators are in short supply and should be reserved for healthcare workers or other medical first responders, as recommended by CDC guidance.

*Why do you need to wear cloth face coverings in the community?* In light of the data about how COVID-19 spreads, along with evidence of widespread COVID-19 illness in communities across the country, CDC recommends that people wear a cloth face covering to cover their nose and mouth in the community setting. This is to protect people around you if you are infected, but do not have symptoms.

*When do you need to wear a cloth face covering?* A cloth face covering should be worn whenever people are in a community setting, especially in situations where you may be near people. These settings include the workplace, grocery stores and pharmacies. These face coverings are not a substitute for social

distancing. Cloth face coverings are especially important to wear in public in areas of widespread COVID-19 illness.

*Do I still need to stay at least 6 feet away from people if wearing a cloth face covering?* Yes, wearing cloth face coverings is an additional public health measure people should take to reduce the spread of COVID-19. CDC still recommends that you stay at least 6 feet away from other people (social distancing), frequent hand cleaning and other everyday preventive actions. A cloth face covering is not intended to protect the wearer, but it may prevent the spread of virus from the wearer to others. This would be especially important if someone is infected, but does not have symptoms.

### **Thank you from Congressman Brindisi**

Please take a moment to look at the attached letter from Congressman Brindisi. We are all so pleased to receive a “thank you,” and the much deserved credit for all that you do!

### **Donations**

Thank you to the following individuals or groups for their generous donations of Personal Protective Equipment:

- All 3 campuses received face shields from the Southern Tier 3D Printed Face Shield Project
- A family member of one of our GSFH residents generously donated \$1000 to the Foundation to support Good Shepherd’s efforts during the pandemic



We know this continues to be overwhelming on many levels. There is a light at the end of the tunnel, with New York State starting to make a plan to reopen very slowly. This will be important and we all need to continue to follow guidelines and mandates so we can continue to stay healthy and safe. Now let’s just all hope for a little warmer weather and sunshine!

Sincerely,

Linda Parke  
Director of Human Resources