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June 4, 2020

To All Staff:

This is week nine 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	6	0	0	6				
GSFH	6	0	1	5	0	0	0	0
GSVE	10	0	1*	9	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	6	0	0	6				
GSFH	16	0	0	16	0	0	0	0
GSVE	10	0	0	10	1	0	0	1
					* precautionary post hospitalization			
Tested as of 5/27/20					5/28/20-6/3/20			

Please note some testing was purely precautionary as the individual was asymptomatic. Ex: fall led to ER visit and tested.

**NYS DOH Voluntary Testing for all Residents**

This testing is for Skilled Nursing and Adult Care residents. Independent Living residents who feel they should be tested should follow up with their personal health care provider. This is baseline testing for all residents, not specifically ordered due to symptoms or exposure.

All of our facilities have completed the process. Chase and GSFH have received all of their results, and we are happy to announce no residents at either facility have tested positive. GSVE completed their testing 5/29/20 and has begun to receive their results. So far, the news at GSVE is also all good. If we have any residents test positive for COVID-19, we will notify those directly impacted first, then do the necessary mass notifications.

**NYS DOH Mandatory Testing for all Staff**

We continue to do the testing of our staffs as required by NYS Executive Order. Each employee is tested two times per week. The test is a simple nasal swab, and results usually arrive within 48 hours.

Please note testing is different than screening. Screening staff involves staff answering a series of questions about travel, work and symptoms, and having their temperature taken at the start of their shifts and every 12 hours thereafter. Testing is a laboratory test to find out if a person has coronavirus (COVID-19).

Results of Mass Testing (for employees who passed the screening process)

	Tested	Positive	Negative	Inconclusive or Indeterminate
GSFH	200	0	199	1
GSVE	144	2	141	0
Chase	119	0	119	0

We have had two asymptomatic staff members test positive for COVID-19 in the first round of mass testing, and another two last week tested positive at GSVE. At GSVE, one worked in Nursing and one in Maintenance. Both are in self-isolation for 14 days. Per Department of Health recommendations, we interviewed these people extensively to identify anyone that they were potentially in close contact with during the 48 hours prior to being tested. Close contact is defined as contact within 6 feet for a period of at least 10 minutes (CDC recently revised this to 15 minutes but NYS is adhering to the more stringent 10 minutes). Those people deemed to have had close contact were notified and instructed to self-quarantine for 14 days. Self-quarantine is defined as self-monitoring for symptoms and staying at home, with the exception of reporting to work. Those considered in close contact were all staff members. No resident was identified as having close contact with these individuals during the look-back period.

As previously stated, our team is monitoring the situation in collaboration with both the NYS Department of Health and our local health department and will follow all their recommendations.

Please remember we are testing over 500 staff members twice per week between all of our campuses. With this type of wide-spread testing, it is highly probable that we will have some additional positive results. We will continue to follow appropriate infection control protocols to protect our residents and staff, will continue to conduct the twice weekly staff testing, and will alert you to any positive results.

***Please note there are no residents that are exhibiting symptoms of illness (COVID-19) at this time.***

### **Self-Care While Social Distancing**

Social distancing doesn't mean that self-care regimens have to fall by the wayside. It may be easy to abandon the practices you put in place to help you regroup and recharge, but during high stress and anxiety times like these, those practices are important to your physical and mental health.

This may be the ideal time to evaluate self-care routines and make needed adjustments to enhance effectiveness and incorporate more innovation. From a digital detox and crafting to baths, there are activities that can still be done effectively while social distancing.

Here are some tips to help maintain self-care practices while social distancing:

- Accept a lack of control – you can't control what happens, but you can control how you react. Prioritize what's important and let go of things that are not.

- Use free resources – apps that provide guided breathing and/or meditations, fitness, and mindfulness apps are great resources to keep you mind and body focused.
- Stay rested – quality of sleep supports your immune system and assists in managing stress.
- Keep connections and maintain routines – use technology to stay connected to colleagues, family, and friends. From videoconferencing to calls and text messages, use technology to hash out feelings and fears, and check-in on those we care about.
- Indulge a little – catch up on our favorite television show, play video games, eat a treat after dinner, but don't go overboard.

Anxiety and stress are natural reactions. Feelings of fear, anger, grief, and helplessness are all normal reactions, but don't let your mind engage in a loop of negative thoughts. Interrupt them with exercise, social media breaks, or other activities that distract your mind from everything happening around you.

You and your family members have access up to eight 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.

### **Stop the Spread of Rumors – Know the facts about COVID-19**

- Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity – fear and anxiety about COVID-19 can cause people to avoid or reject others even though they are not at risk for spreading the virus.
- For most people, the immediate risk of becoming seriously ill from the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to be low – older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more serious complications from COVID-19.
- Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people – per the DOH, staff cannot work for 14 days and must test negative after the 14 days in order to return to work.
- There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy – wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing our nose, coughing, or sneezing, going to the bathroom, and before eating or preparing food.
- You can help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms – fever, cough, shortness of breath; seek medical advice if you develop symptoms and have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19.



We are very grateful for your continued support and dedication that each and every one of you has provided to our residents during this pandemic – thanks, you are greatly appreciated!

Sincerely,

Linda Parke,  
Director of Human Resources

## Message from GSC Corporate Senior Staff

During the pandemic, in an effort to control the spread of any illness, we have discouraged staff travel between campuses with some exceptions:

- To ensure proper staffing levels
- To meet specific resident needs
- To deliver mail and supplies
- To address other urgent needs that require in-person attention (ex: IT needs)

We do not encourage travel between campuses for meetings or work that does not require in-person contact. Mike and Patti have made GSVE their home base, while Linda and Jim are based at GSFH.

As NYS eases its restrictions and as the spread of COVID subsides, we will allow increased inter-campus travel. For now, stay safe and we look forward to being able to visit all of our sister facilities soon.

Sincerely,

Mike Keenan, Pat Mackey, Jim Koniszewski, and Linda Parke