



November 12, 2020



To All Families of our Skilled Nursing and Adult Care Residents:

“WELCOME” TO OUR NEW FAMILY CONTACTS

We are required to notify all residents, families and staff of a facility whenever we have a positive COVID test result for any staff member or resident. While CMS requires this notice be made by 5 pm of the next day, NYS is more stringent, requiring notice within 24 hours. Two points of contact are required.

To help us meet these requirements, we have utilized a broadcast tool (School Messenger) to send emails and automated phone calls to up to two email addresses and two phone numbers per resident or resident contact, which is usually the first Health Care Proxy. The system then broadcasts to all the contact phone numbers and emails in this database. We also use this system to send out this weekly update letter to our resident family contacts.

You will also receive a broadcast when we have a staff member or resident test positive for COVID-19. This includes an email *and a phone call*. We understand these phone calls can come at inconvenient times and would like to offer you the option to opt out of the phone calls for one or both of the numbers on file *so long as we have an email address on file to receive the alert*. This opt out will only effect the notification databases used by School Messenger. All contact info will remain on file in our Electronic Health Record, PointClickCare.

If you wish to opt out of alerts for one or both phone numbers we have file, please email me at pm@goodshepherdcommunities.org with the specifics. Please note it will take time to make the changes to the databases, so dependent on volume, there may be a delay from the time you make the request and the time the database revisions are completed. Thank you in advance for your patience.

TESTING

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	12	0	0	12	1	1	0	0
GSFH	14	0	3	10 and 1 inconclusive	0	0	0	0
GSVE	17	0	2	15	1	0	1	0
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	13	0	0	13	1	1	0	0
GSFH	42	0	8	34	4	0	0	4
GSVE	30	0	0	30	1	0	1	0
Tested as of 11/4/20				11/5/20-11/11/20				
Please note some testing was purely precautionary as the individual was asymptomatic. Ex: fall led to ER visit and tested.								

Please note the chart above is for testing conducted for cause only. At this time, it does not include the mass staff weekly testing discussed below, resident exposure testing, or staff testing done as part of any pre-op procedures. At GSFH there was an additional resident who tested positive as a result of mass testing not reflected above.

NYS DOH Mandatory Testing for all Staff: Results of week of 11/5/20-11/11/20:

Mass Testing

Mass Employee Testing				
	Tested	Positive	Negative	Inconclusive or Indeterminate
GSFH	164	3 (all repeats)	161	0
GSVE	162	4 new & 1 repeat	157	0
Chase	106	0	106	0

Staff Testing 11/5/20-11/11/20

In the last round of staff testing, we had the following positive results:

GSFH: No new positive staff results

GSVE:

11/5/20

- A staff member who works at Good Shepherd Village at Endwell in the housekeeping department *tested positive for COVID-19*. The employee is asymptomatic and will self-isolate for 14 days. One staff member was in close contact, they will follow all Department of Health instructions regarding quarantine.

11/6/20

- Two staff members who work at Good Shepherd Village at Endwell *tested positive for COVID-19*. One employee works in housekeeping and is symptomatic and one employee works in nursing and is asymptomatic, both will self-isolate for 14 days. One staff member was identified as being in close contact, they will follow all Department of Health instructions regarding quarantine. There are no residents who are considered close contacts.

11/8/20

- One staff member who works at Good Shepherd Village at Endwell in the nursing department *tested positive for COVID-19*. The employee is asymptomatic and will self-isolate at home for 14 days. No staff or residents were identified as close contacts. All staff is utilizing full PPE for contact/droplet precautions including the use of N95 respirator masks.

11/10/20

- One staff member who works at Good Shepherd Village at Endwell in the dietary department *tested positive for COVID-19*. The employee has mild symptoms and will self-isolate at home for 14 days. Two staff members were in close contact and will self-isolate for 14 days. One of the close contacts has mild symptoms and the other is asymptomatic.

Chase: No new positive staff results.

Resident Testing 11/5/20-11/11/20

GSFH: No new positive resident tests.

Chase: No new positive resident tests.

GSVE:

11/6/20

- Four of our residents on our Skilled Nursing Unit tested *positive for COVID-19*. At the time, one resident had mild symptoms and the other three are asymptomatic. We created an isolation unit in the Leisure Room and the four residents were re-located to that area. No staff or residents were in close contact.

11/11/20

- A Skilled Nursing resident tested positive for COVID-19. The resident is symptomatic.
- Three more SNF residents tested positive as part of mass testing 11/11/20 but they are all asymptomatic.
- No staff or residents were identified as close contacts of any of these residents. All staff are utilizing full PPE for contact/droplet precautions including the use of N95 respirator masks.

We will continue with our mass testing of residents and staff per the CMS testing guidance.

We continue to have a daily monitoring system to monitor all residents for signs/symptoms of COVID-19, as well as our daily screening for all staff.

GSFH REHAB UPDATE

All of our previously remaining positive cases are considered recovered and we are preparing to discontinue isolation.

Salon Service

Last week we received notice today that effective 11/6/2020, Adult Care Facilities (ACFs) and Nursing Homes (NH) may resume in-house salon services, provided that the facility is able to adhere to all local, state, and federal requirements as applicable, relative to hair salons and barbershops.

Good Shepherd Fairview Home directly employs their beauticians and has been able to provide services on the units rather than in the salon. Good Shepherd Village at Endwell and Chase contract out salon services and have not been allowed to resume services.

The new guidelines are very detailed and vary by level of care in terms of testing requirements for salon personnel.

At GSVE, we hope to resume salon services next week for our ALR only as SNF is currently a closed unit. At Chase, we are evaluating how to best resume services.

Cuomo Announced New Restrictions

Since COVID cases continue to rise in NY, Governor Cuomo has initiated new restrictions for places with liquor licenses to cease operations at 10 pm, which go into effect on Friday, November 13. Restaurants will be allowed to offer curbside food-only pickup after 10 pm. Also, gyms in NY will have to close at 10 pm every day. New limits on the size of gatherings in homes are being implemented as well. Private residential parties now will not be permitted to have more than 10 people, which is down from the current limit of 50.

Staff Testing

Another change in NYS policy impacts staff testing. The new requirement imposes a twice-weekly testing requirement for all nursing home personnel in red, orange, and yellow micro-cluster zones. The requirement takes effect on Nov. 17th for facilities that are already in those zones and seven days from the designation of a zone going forward. It must continue until the facility is no longer in a micro-cluster zone. There is also a federal requirement to test personnel twice weekly when the *county* positivity rate exceeds 10 percent – thus, even if your facility is not in a micro-cluster, you may need to test personnel twice weekly if your county positivity rate exceeds 10 percent.

Good Shepherd Fairview Home is the only GSC facility in a yellow zone, and will fully comply with this requirement as long as necessary.

NYS Quarantine Travel Restrictions.

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced new guidelines allowing out-of-state travelers to New York to "test out" of the mandatory 14-day quarantine. Travelers from states that are contiguous with New York will continue to be exempt from the travel advisory; however, covered travelers must continue to fill out the [Traveler Health Form](#). Essential workers will continue to be exempt as well. The new protocol was effective Wednesday, November 4.

For any traveler to New York State from out of state, exempting the contiguous states, the new guidelines for travelers to test-out of the mandatory 14-day quarantine are below:

- For travelers who were in another state for more than 24 hours:
 - Travelers must obtain a test within three days of departure from that state.
 - The traveler must, upon arrival in New York, quarantine for three days.
 - On day 4 of their quarantine, the traveler must obtain seek another COVID test. If both tests come back negative, the traveler may exit quarantine early upon receipt of the second negative diagnostic test.

- For travelers who were in another state for less than 24 hours:
 - The traveler does not need a test prior to their departure from the other state, and does not need to quarantine upon arrival in New York State.
 - However, the traveler must fill out the traveler information form upon entry into New York State, and take a COVID diagnostic test 4 days after their arrival in New York.

Local health departments will validate tests, if necessary, and if a test comes back positive, will issue isolation orders and initiate contact tracing. The local health department must make contact with the state the traveler came from, to ensure contact tracing proceeds there as well. All travelers must continue to fill out the traveler information form upon arrival into New York State to contribute to New York State's robust contact tracing program.

FAQs: We receive multiple individual emails or calls with questions. Rather than respond individually to multiple individuals asking the same or similar questions, we have added a FAQs section each week. Please note we have an obligation to maintain the privacy of the health information of our employees and cannot provide information which could potentially identify them.

Q: Which of our facilities and level of care currently allow visitors?

A: Currently, Chase Memorial Nursing Home and Good Shepherd Fairview Home ACF (ALR, EALR, and ALP) are open for visitation.

Good Shepherd Village at Endwell Skilled Nursing Facility and Assisted Living (ALR,SNALR, and EALR) and Good Shepherd Fairview Home's SNF are required to pause visitation due to recent positive COVID test results. We are hopeful that GSFH SNF will re-open for visitation next week.

Because the hours available and locations vary by facility and level of care, we are issuing facility\level of care specific broadcasts to the impacted families with more specific information.

Also please note that a single positive COVID test at a facility\level of care will result in the Department of Health suspending visitation for another 14 days. COVID prevalence is increasing in NYS. In the event that we must suspend visitation, we will notify any visitors scheduled individually, and then issue a broadcast with more general information.

Please remember the NYS DOH guidelines for visitation for ACFs and SNFs are different in many ways, including how many people can visit at a time and the SNF requirement that visitors present verified negative COVID test results within the last week prior to the visit. If you are concerned about this requirement and the burdens it presents, please reach out to the Governor's office at 1-518-474-8390 to voice your concerns.

Please remember that NYS DOH has very strict guidelines on how we structure our visitations. Social distancing is absolutely required. If visitors do not comply with these guidelines, the visitor will be asked to leave and may not be allowed to return depending on the nature of the violation. These guidelines are for the protection of our residents, and we ask everyone to comply.

We continue to offer virtual visits, and can arrange for window visits. Both should be scheduled through the Therapeutic Recreation department.

Donations

Thank you to the following individuals or groups for their generous donations to support of our staff and residents:

- The family of Mr. and Mrs. Jones donated cake pops for GSVE SNF and ALR to celebrate Mr. /Mrs. Jones wedding anniversary. .

Please remember to contact the facility's Administrator prior to making a donation so they are aware and they can review any restrictions.



Please visit our website for ongoing coverage of our response to COVID.

Thank you all for your patience during this difficult time. If you are feeling unusually high levels of stress, there are a number of resources available.

- Office of Mental Health Emotional Support Helpline: 1-844-863-9314 *
The Emotional Support Helpline provides free and confidential support, helping callers experiencing increased anxiety due to the coronavirus emergency. The Helpline is staffed by volunteers, including mental health professionals, who have received training in crisis counseling.
- CDC Resources : <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>

Kathy Swezey
GSFH Executive Director

Jennifer Davidson
GSVE Health Care Administrator

Gabby Skillen
Chase Executive Director