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www.GoodShepherdCommunities.org

November 24, 2020



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

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

All of us at Good Shepherd Communities wish you and your families a safe and happy holiday. Hopefully we can all spend time with our loved ones in the community while respecting the current COVID restrictions to protect ourselves, families and friends. We look forward to a time when we can join together in a more relaxed and joyous manner.

“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.

SCHEDULE CHANGE

Effective today, we will be sending out our weekly communications on Wednesday rather than Thursday. This will allow the RNs who collect some of the testing data to align this collection with other reporting deadlines. For this week, we will be reporting on a short week- Thursday 11/19-end of day Tuesday 11/24. Future reporting periods will be Wednesday-Tuesday as opposed to Thursday-Wednesday.

TESTING

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

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	13	0	0	13	1	0	1	0
GSFH	15	0	3	11 and 1 inconclusive	0	0	0	0
GSVE	18	0	3	15	0	0	0	0
Residents								
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	14	0	0	14	0	0	0	0
GSFH	56	0	8	48	5	0	0	5
GSVE	34	0	1	33	1	0	0	1
Tested as of 11/18/20					11/19/20-11/24/20			

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.

NYS DOH Mandatory Testing for all Staff: Results of week of 11/19/20-11/24/20:

Mass Testing

	Tested	Positive	Negative	Inconclusive or Indeterminate
GSFH	215	0	215	0
GSVE	106	4 repeat and 1 repeat deemed new case	100	1
Chase	74	0	74	0

Staff Testing 11/19/20-11/24/20

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

GSFH: No new positive staff results

GSVE:

11/21/20

- An employee in the dietary department tested positive for COVID-19. This is a repeat positive test. The staff member is asymptomatic and will self-isolate for 14 days. One staff member was identified as being in close contact and will self-isolate for 14 days.

Chase:

11/20/20

- One administrative staff member tested positive for COVID-19 after becoming symptomatic and being tested for cause. No residents were close contact, and one staff member was identified as being a close contact and will self-quarantine for 14 days.

Resident Testing 11/19/20-11/24/20

GSFH: No new positive resident tests.

Chase: No new positive resident tests.

GSVE: No new positive resident tests.

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.

Salon Service

Good Shepherd Fairview Home directly employs their beauticians and has been allowed to provide services on the units with some restrictions depending on the level of care. The week after Thanksgiving, they will be expanding this.

At Good Shepherd Village at Endwell, salon services have resumed for our ALR residents and continues in IL.

At Chase, we hope to resume services next week.

NYS DOH Guidance on Residents Leaving the Facility for Holiday Visits

Yesterday, November 24, 2020, NYS issued guidance on this topic. While there are still some unknowns which we are clarifying, the requirements are serious and their impact should be carefully evaluated.

- Residents who leave a facility must:
 - Quarantine or minimize contact to the extent safely possible prior to their return to the facility.
 - **Be quarantined on transmission-based precautions upon return to the facility for 14 days.**
 - **Test negative immediately (within 24 hours) prior** to return to the facility.
 - **Be tested at least three times** during the 14-day quarantine period at the facility, including on the first day (upon return) and the last day that a resident must be quarantined.
 - Residents who leave and a family or friend must attest in writing that they:
 - Are aware of the risks involved with taking the resident out of the facility;
 - Will follow masking, social distancing, and hand hygiene practices pursuant to CDC and DOH directives;
 - Will notify the facility if the resident becomes ill within one week of leaving the facility;
 - Will notify the facility if anyone with whom the resident socialized tests positive for COVID-19 or influenza or exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 and influenza within 14 days of the resident's return to the facility;
 - Will communicate with the facility about a return date for the resident to the facility in accordance with the facility's policy; and
 - Will quarantine or minimize contact (or assist the resident to do so) to the extent safely possible prior to return to a nursing home.

Please consider these requirements carefully in considering bringing your loved one out of the facility for a visit, particularly the requirement for a 14 day quarantine upon return.

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, Good Shepherd Village at Endwell Assisted Living (ALR, SNALR, and EALR) and Good Shepherd Fairview Home ACF (ALR, EALR, and ALP) and SNF are open for visitation.

Chase Memorial Nursing Home and Good Shepherd Village at Endwell Skilled Nursing Facility are required to pause visitation due to recent positive COVID test results.

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.

Visitation Monitors Needed

To help facilitate visits and to comply with federal and NYS guidelines, monitors are required to observe all in person visits. We are actively seeking people interested in applying to be Visitation Monitors, either on a casual or part-time basis. These are paid positions and do require backgrounds checks and drug screening.

With the holidays approaching, we anticipate visitations to increase, and we need to add more monitors. *If you or someone you know would be interested in helping other families spend time with their loved ones, please apply on-line at www.goodshepherdcommunities.org.* Duties include screening, observing, and disinfecting surfaces the visitor touches.

Donations

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

- Brad and Shari Peck (Bob Decker's family) sent Molasses cookies for the GSVE SNF staff

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

LeadingAge Award of Honor:

Katie Smith Sloan, the President and CEO of Leading Age released the following last week:

“Every year, LeadingAge bestows the Award of Honor on one member who has provided nationally significant, transformative leadership in aging services. This person shows vision, mission, compassion, and courage every day of the year.

I have the privilege to announce this year's Award of Honor recipient: every member of LeadingAge. Every CNA, housekeeper, service coordinator, dining server, cook, nurse, therapist, dishwasher, social worker, and every administrator, manager, and receptionist. **Everyone.** Your dedication keeps people thriving, families together, and communities intact.

Thank you for everything you have done, and continue to do, in the face of incredible adversity. You truly deserve this award. Congratulations!

[Take a moment to watch this video](https://leadingage.org/2020-leadingage-award-honor) and share with your team. [Note: the video can be found at <https://leadingage.org/2020-leadingage-award-honor>]

With gratitude,
Katie”

Congratulations and a heartfelt “Thank you!” to all of our staff who make such a difference in the lives of our residents.



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