



January 6, 2021



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](mailto: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	17	0	2	15	1	0	0	1
GSFH	23	0	4	18 and 1 inconclusive	2	0	1	1
GSVE	21	0	3	18	2	0	1	1
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	17	0	2	15	0	0	0	0
GSFH	77	0	9	68	3	0	0	3
GSVE	38	0	1	37	4	0	0	4
Tested as of 12/29/20					12/30/20-1/5/21			
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, resident mass testing or staff testing done as part of any pre-op procedures.

**NYS DOH Mandatory Testing for all Staff: Results of week of 12/30/20-1/5/21:**

**Mass Testing**

<b>Mass Employee Testing</b>				
	Tested	Positive	Negative	Inconclusive or Indeterminate
GSFH	167	1 and 2 repeats	164	0
GSVE	149	1 and 3 repeats	145	0
Chase	77	8	64	5

***Staff Testing 12/30/20-1/6/21***

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

*GSFH:*

1/2/20

- One of our staff members who works at Good Shepherd Fairview Home in Binghamton in the Therapy department *tested positive for COVID-19*. There are no staff members or residents who were considered to be close contacts to the positive staff member due to PPE in use during contact. The staff member has mild symptoms and will self-isolate for 14 days.

1/4/21

- One of our staff members who works at Good Shepherd Fairview Home in Binghamton has *tested positive for COVID-19*. The employee works in our clinical department in the Skilled Nursing facility. This employee has mild symptoms and will self-isolate for 14 days. No residents or staff were considered close contacts with the positive staff member.

*Chase*

12/30/20

- Two of our Nursing employees tested positive. The staff members are symptomatic, and will self-isolate. No other staff or residents are considered close contacts due to the PPE staff are wearing while in the facility.

12/31/20

- A member of the Nursing department tested positive. This staff member had been experiencing mild symptoms, but is now asymptomatic. The employee will self-isolate. No other staff or residents are considered close contacts due to the PPE staff are wearing while in the facility.

- Two of our employees tested positive for COVID-19. One is in a management role, and the other is in Nursing. Both are symptomatic. No other staff or residents are considered close contacts due to the PPE staff are wearing while in the facility.

1/1/21

- Two more employees tested positive. One is in Nursing, and is being contacted. The other is in the Therapy department, who reports being asymptomatic. No other staff or residents are considered close contacts due to the PPE staff are wearing while in the facility.

1/3/21

- One of our employees in the Nursing department tested positive for COVID-19. Contact tracing has been completed. No other staff or residents are considered close contacts due to the PPE staff are wearing while in the facility.

*GSVE:*

1/1/21

- One employee in the Environmental Services department was tested for cause and tested positive for COVID-19. The staff is symptomatic and will self-isolate for 14 days. No staff members or residents were in close contact.
- One employee in the Maintenance department tested positive in our mass testing. They are asymptomatic and will self-isolate for 14 days.

***Resident Testing 12/30/20-01/6/21:** Please note the narrative below includes **all positive test results**, including results of required resident mass testing. Therefore it may not correspond with the table above, which represents only those tested for cause.*

*GSFH:*

1/2/21

- A resident on the Rehab unit tested positive *for COVID-19*. There are no staff members or residents who were considered to be close contacts to the positive resident due to PPE in use during contact. The resident is symptomatic and will be on isolation for 14 days.
- Sadly, one of our residents who had previously tested positive for COVID-19 passed away. Our thoughts are with their families and loved ones.

*Chase:*

12/30/20

- Nine more of our residents tested positive for COVID-19. No staff or other residents are considered to be a close contact of any of these residents due to the personal protective equipment that is required to be worn in resident care areas at all times.
- One of our residents who had previously tested positive for COVID-19 passed away. Our thoughts are with their families and loved ones.

12/31/20

- Six more of our residents tested positive for COVID-19. No staff or other residents are considered to be a close contact of any of these residents due to the personal protective equipment that is required to be worn in resident care areas at all times.

1/1/21

- One of our residents who had previously tested positive for COVID-19 passed away. Our thoughts are with their families and loved ones.

1/2/21

- One of our residents who had previously tested positive for COVID-19 passed away. Our thoughts are with their families and loved ones.

1/3/21

- One of our residents who had previously tested positive for COVID-19 passed away. Our thoughts are with their families and loved ones.

1/4/21

- One of our residents who had previously tested positive for COVID-19 passed away. Our thoughts are with their families and loved ones.

*GSVE*: No new resident positive results.

## **Vaccination**

- **SNF**
  - At this point, all three of our campuses have had their first vaccine clinic for all SNF residents, and the second is planned at each at a three week interval since the initial vaccine. At the second clinic, residents who were not included in the first clinic will receive their first shot, and a third clinic is planned for their second dose.
- **ACF:**
  - This program for ACF residents is set to launch next week. Per a recent DOH notice: “Adult care facilities hold a critical role on the long term care continuum. As such, adult care facility staff and residents will be eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccination through a CDC-contracted pharmacy partner beginning January 11, 2021. Adult care facilities are matched to a pharmacy partner who will outreach the adult care facility to schedule in-house vaccine clinics. Pharmacists will be onsite to administer the vaccine and monitor post-vaccination. The logistics will be discussed between the pharmacy and facility to ensure appropriate social distancing and other practices are preserved.”
  - GSVE ALR clinic dates: 1/14, 2/4, 2/25
  - GSFH ALR Clinic Dates: 1/13, 2/3, 2/24
- **Independent Living residents are not considered eligible at this time.** This is not a GSC decision. NYS is establishing a prioritization list which all our facilities must follow.
- **Staff**
  - ALL staff regardless of department are eligible for the program, with prioritization based on risk. These clinics have begun at all the Campuses
- There will be no cost to the resident or families for this vaccination.
- While this is not mandatory for our residents or staff, **we are hoping all of our eligible residents and staff will elect to be vaccinated unless there are contraindications.**

## **Furloughed Staff**

While we our facilities continue to provide quality care to all of our residents, we want to be completely transparent about some of the challenges we are facing. Each campus has had and continues to have employees who have either tested positive for COVID or have had close contacts, and are therefore furloughed for a minimum of 14 days. This will obviously create staffing challenges. The following summarizes the currently furloughed staff members at each facility:

	Nursing	Env Servic	Dietary	ACF	Other
GSFH	9	2	1	0	2
GSVE	2	2	0	2	1
Chase	12	1	0	n/a	5

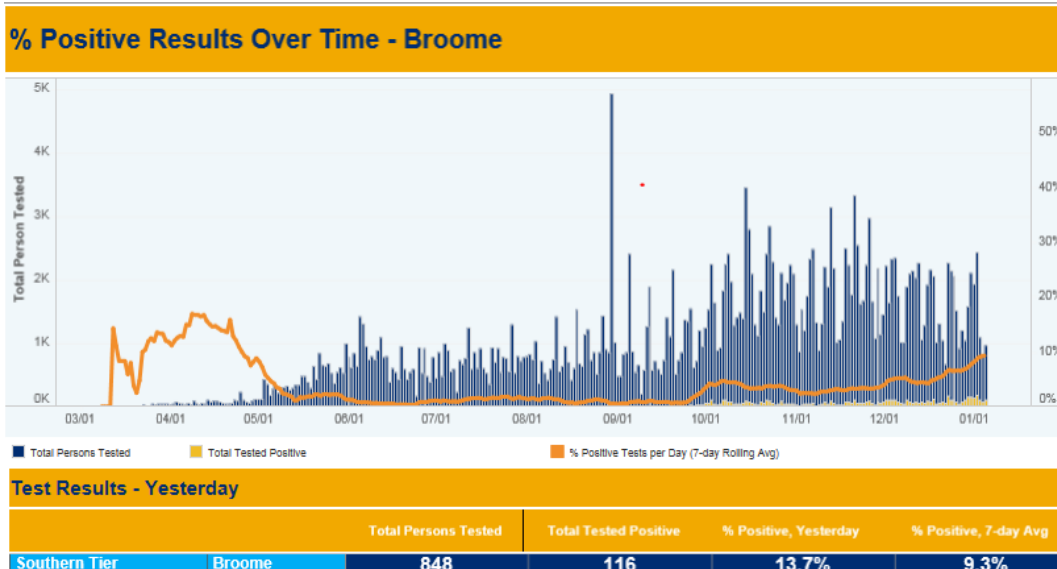
### Positivity Rates and COVID Zones

NYS reports on COVID Positivity Rates by County and also on COVID Cluster Spots. Each week, we will include the most recent info. Increasing positivity can impact all businesses, and for nursing homes can mean increased requirements for employee testing. Per CMS guidelines:

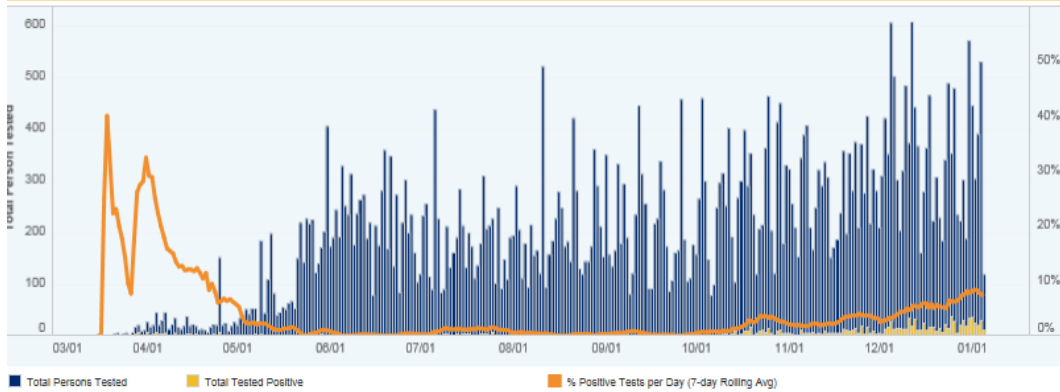
**Table 2: Routine Testing Intervals Vary by Community COVID-19 Activity Level**

Community COVID-19 Activity	County Positivity Rate in the past week	Minimum Testing Frequency
Low	<5%	Once a month
Medium	5% - 10%	Once a week*
High	>10%	Twice a week*

\*This frequency presumes availability of Point of Care testing on-site at the nursing home or where off-site testing turnaround time is <48 hours.



## % Positive Results Over Time - Chenango



### Test Results - Yesterday

		Total Persons Tested	Total Tested Positive	% Positive, Yesterday	% Positive, 7-day Avg
Southern Tier	Chenango	109	11	10.1%	7.5%

Testing is also required to increase per NYS if a facility is located within a COVID cluster hot spot. Currently, none of our facilities are in a COVID cluster hot spot.

**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, all levels of care at all GSC facilities 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.

### Donations

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

- Little Meadows United Methodist Church made a monetary donation to the GSFH Therapeutic Recreation Department in honor of Pastor Paul Reed.

Please remember to contact the facility's Administrator prior to making a non-monetary 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>

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