



July 16, 2020



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

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	9	0	0	9	0	0	0	0
GSFH	6	0	1	5	0	0	0	0
GSVE	11	0	1*	10	0	0	0	0
			* 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	7	0	0	7	1	0	0	1
GSFH	20	0	0	20	0	0	0	0
GSVE	15	0	0	15	0	0	0	0
Tested as of 7/8/20					7/9/20-7/15/20			
Please note some testing was purely precautionary as the individual was asymptomatic. Ex: fall led to ER visit and tested.								

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.

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 baseline testing, or staff testing done as part of any pre-op procedures.

**NYS DOH Mandatory Testing for all Staff**

We continue to do the testing of our staffs as required by NYS Executive Order. Per Executive Order, each employee is tested *once 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	177	2	175	0

GSVE	156	1	155	0
Chase	139	0	139	0

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

*GSFH*

- Maintenance Worker and Office Worker: Asymptomatic. Self-isolation for 14 days. No resident in close contact with either staff member. Each had close contact with two staff members who were informed of pertinent restrictions.

*GSVE*

- Dietary employee: Self-isolation for 14 days. No resident in close contact with the staff member. Four other staff members had close contact with this person and they have been informed of pertinent restrictions.

*Chase*

- No new positive test results; however, there are two employees who tested negative on Monday but have begun to display possible symptoms. Both have been instructed to self-isolate and cannot return to work until they meet criteria related to both test status and symptomology established by the Health Department.

Our staffs at all our campuses are monitoring these situations in collaboration with both the NYS DOH and local Department of Health and will follow all recommendations.

**NYS Quarantine Travel Restrictions- UPDATE**

The list has been expanded again (*newly added states in italics*) and currently, the advisory applies to anyone traveling from Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, *Minnesota*, Mississippi, Nevada, *New Mexico*, North Carolina, *Ohio*, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Utah and *Wisconsin*. *Delaware was removed from the list.*

This requirement to self-quarantine for 14 days includes not only visitors, but also New York State residents returning from the affected states. *Please keep this in mind as you plan any vacations while the order is in effect.*

All out-of-state travelers from designated states must complete a form upon entering New York. Travelers who leave the airport without completing the form will be subject to a \$2,000 fine and may be brought to a hearing and ordered to complete mandatory quarantine. Travelers coming to New York from designated states through other means of transport, including trains and cars, must fill out the form online.

The quarantine requirements do not apply to any individual passing through designated states for a limited duration (i.e., less than 24 hours) through the course of travel (e.g., layovers, rest area stops, etc.).

**Fitness and COVID-19**

Regular exercise is essential for everyone under normal circumstances. However, here are a few reasons why exercise is especially crucial during the COVID-19 pandemic:

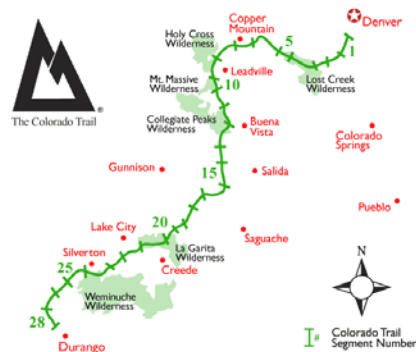
- Exercise (regular, moderate intensity) boosts the immune system and helps the body fight off infections
- Exercise may prevent weight gain associated with dietary changes brought on by COVID restrictions

- Exercise reduces stress and anxiety and builds emotional resilience
- Exercise improves sleep, and getting a good night’s sleep has also been found to boost your immune system

Exercise may be especially beneficial for older adults and people with chronic health conditions, such as diabetes, arthritis, or heart disease. Regular exercise can help to improve balance, flexibility, strength, mobility, and cardiovascular health. Plus, it can boost energy and overall well-being.

Per Nicole Keith, president of the American College of Sports Medicine, “COVID’s negative health outcomes come from diseases that are positively impacted by physical activity...If you give people a place to be active, the likelihood they will do it is higher.”

All our campuses are finding innovative ways to provide socially distanced exercise options in a time when group programming is not permitted. Some of the options are wheelchair exercises, walking programs and even ‘dance’ parties. To highlight just one: **GSVE IL Spring Fitness Challenge 2020: The Colorado Trail**



The Colorado Trail is a long distance trail running for 486 miles (782km) from the mouth of Waterton Canyon southwest of Denver to Durango in Colorado, United States. Along the way it passes through eight mountain ridges, six national forests, and six wilderness areas. Its highest point is 13,271 feet above sea level, and most of the trail is above 10,000 feet.

This year’s Spring Fitness Challenge was a walking challenge. One minute of walking, either indoors or outdoors, will equate to one kilometer on the trail. *Example: If you went for a 20 minute walk, you earned 20 “kilometers” on the trail.*

As a fitness *challenge*, the goal was to *challenge* our residents to incorporate more physical activity into their daily routine. Winners will be announced soon.

**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: The news is reporting NYS has allowed visits to resume in nursing homes and adult care facilities. When will our facilities allow visitors? And are there exceptions for outside visits?*

*A:* I am attaching the full NYS DOH advisories outlining the criteria for re-opening to visitors for both SNF and ACF, and guidelines for visiting once re-opening is allowed. As you can see, there are many conditions that must be met, and at this time, none of our facilities are in a position to re-open for visits, including outside visits, due primarily to the criteria pertaining to 28 days COVID-free. Unfortunately, it will be at least *at most optimistically* a matter of 3-4 weeks before we can re-open to visitors and even that target may not be achievable. We understand this is frustrating, but please note LeadingAgeNY is actively working with the NYS DOH to refine these conditions or at least allow more flexibility.

We do not agree with this advisory as it is currently written and are advocating against it. And we encourage you to advocate personally on this issue by reaching out to your elected state and local officials. Together we all need to send the message that NYS needs to strike a balance between protecting our residents from COVID, and allowing vital emotional and psychosocial **in-person safe** interactions with loved ones.

*Q: What should I do if I am aware of a staff member or resident my loved one has come into contact with who were not wearing their mask when they should, or wearing it incorrectly?*

A: Our staff have all been trained and reminded about the importance of wearing a mask, and we have educated our residents as well. If your loved one informs you they encountered someone who is ignoring this, please let the contact person listed below for your facility know the details so they can follow-up with the individual. This is not being a busybody - you are helping to keep us all safe, and we will be sure there no retaliation against your loved one for reporting this to us.

## Donations

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

- “The Family of Phyllis Lannon” sent in a gift box from Harry and David’s for GSFH Cameo Court staff and the TR Dept.
- St Andrew’s Episcopal Church sent a flower arrangement to the staff at Chase Memorial.
- Rose O’Connell provided cheese cake to GSVE SNF 11-7 staff last week.

We are very grateful for all the support and donations, but 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