



May 7, 2020



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

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	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
GSFH	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
GSVE	7	0	1*	6	2	0	0	2
			* 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	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
GSFH	8	0	0	8	1	0	0	1
GSVE	4	0	0	4	0	0	0	0
Tested as of 4/29/20					4/30/20-5/6/20			
Please note some testing was purely precautionary as the individual was asymptomatic. Ex: fall led to ER visit and tested.								
Correction: Last week incorrectly identified GSVE Employees Negative = 6. Correct # is 5.								

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

Contingency Plan for a Positive Resident

We have not had any of our residents test positive for COVID-19 at any of our facilities, but we have contingency plans in place. Any resident who tests positive will immediately be sent to the negative pressure room constructed at each campus. These areas are designed to create negative pressure which is an isolation technique used to prevent cross-contamination from room to room. Each area will include a separate exit area where staff can remove possibly contaminated PPEs upon exiting. We sincerely hope we never have to put these areas to use, but the truth is if you wait for your first resident to test positive to start the process, you are already too late. This area will provide enhanced safety not just for our residents, but to our staff as they provide care as well if we are faced with an active COVID-19 case.

If the resident's condition becomes more acute and requires more care than we can provide, they would be transferred to an area hospital for treatment.

DOH Testing for all Residents and Staff

Good Shepherd has been in contact with the NYS Department of Health (DOH) to explore COVID-19 viral testing for all our Health Care residents (voluntary basis) and staff (required). NYS DOH is offering this program throughout the state for interested nursing facilities and adult care facilities, but it is still a relatively new initiative and is still evolving. Priorities for testing change frequently based on current conditions and resources, so it is too early to provide any definitive information as to the actual process or timing. Possibilities include a DOH team conducting the testing on-site, Broome County coordinating the effort, or our internal team doing the testing with testing kits provided by DOH. We are also asking whether our IL residents could be included but we do not have clarification on this yet.

It is also very important to note that such testing captures a single moment in time. A person may test negative today, then be exposed to the virus and develop an infection. ***Ongoing infection control practices remain critical, including handwashing, social distancing and wearing masks.***

We will keep you informed as our discussions with NYS DOH continue. As family members and in many cases, Health Care Proxies, it is important for you to know that consent is required to test residents for COVID-19 (as it would be for influenza). Once we know more about the process and type of test, we will share this information with you so you and your loved one can make an informed choice as to whether to have the testing conducted.

Generic Information on Testing

Two kinds of tests are available for COVID-19: viral tests and antibody tests.

- A viral test tells you if you have a current infection.
- An antibody test tells you if you had a previous infection

To learn if you have a **current infection**, **viral tests** are used. But not everyone needs this test. Most people will have mild illness and can recover at home without medical care and may not need to be tested. Furthermore, the CDC has guidance for who should be tested, but decisions about testing are made by state and local health departments or healthcare providers.

To learn if you have had a **previous infection**, **antibody tests** are used. But an antibody test may not be able to show if you have a current infection, because it can take 1-3 weeks after infection to make antibodies. It is not known yet if having antibodies to the virus can protect someone from getting infected with the virus again, or how long that protection might last.

LeadingAge Mother's Day Campaign

This Mother's Day, LeadingAge is inviting all Americans to join them in the fight to protect the older people we care about most (like our moms!). The campaign is designed to lift up the care workers who have dedicated their lives to caring for older Americans—and are risking their own lives during this crisis. Please use the following link to learn more about how you can join this campaign and show your appreciation for those on the front line during this pandemic by sharing posts and giving a shout-out to caregivers who are important in your life. We know how much your appreciation means to our staff, and given all the negative press long term care has been receiving lately, we encourage you to join this campaign.

https://www.leadingage.org/mothersday?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiWm1Jek1tTm9ZbVJrTURVNCIsInQiOiJ6cVZwbWp1c0QrcjZKU2MrRGFmQnFHFWJBWVdReEo2NHBPZHpHOVIWXC8zMIY4a0JWVkpJc1FUaXE4citlMU1WWUY3NVp0ZFJUdjBKVWVHWnpiRDFlLdFTM2tMNzNISlp6OThKN0VQeVZsTWtUZjRoTjRCdE1QUXBibUJWZGVucUkifQ%3D



Recent Federal Response (April 30th Announcements)

Personal Protective Equipment for Medicare and Medicaid Nursing Homes

- FEMA is coordinating shipments of 14 day supplies to more than 15,400 Medicare and Medicaid certified nursing homes across the nation. By the beginning of July, each facility is to receive two separate packages containing a seven-day supply of eye protection, surgical masks, gowns and gloves. Each package will be individualized for the nursing home based on the level of staffing, and the deployment will prioritize nursing facilities in the most densely populated areas. These supplies are meant to supplement existing PPE efforts by the federal government.

Coronavirus Commission for Safety and Quality in Nursing Home

Per CMS, this new commission will be composed of leading industry experts, doctors and specialists, resident and patient advocates, family members, infection and prevention control specialists, and state and local authorities. It is expected to begin meeting in May. The commission is charged with helping to inform efforts to safeguard the health and quality of life of vulnerable Americans by focusing on the three key tasks:

- Putting nursing home residents first by ensuring they are protected from COVID-19 and improving the responsiveness of care delivery to meet the needs of all residents to maximize the quality of life for residents.
- Strengthen regulations to enable rapid and effective mitigation of COVID-19 transmission on nursing homes, and
- Enhance federal and state enforcement strategies to improve compliance with infection control policies in response to COVID-19

Reactions

Reactions to the April 30th announcements was mixed. The President/CEO of American Health Care and National Center for Assisted Living, Mark Parkinson thanked the administration for their support and said the announcement sent “a clear message about the important role of long-term care in the national systems and our responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.” However, LeadingAge National President and CEO, Katie Smith Sloan was less enthusiastic, stating the announcements “fell far short of what is needed to protect the most vulnerable Americans from the coronavirus.”

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:

- Binghamton Hanmaun Korean Presbyterian Church- face masks that were given out to the GSFH IL residents
- Office of Aging- facemasks for GSFH IL residents.
- A family member donated many individually packaged snacks for the GSFH Assisted Living Staff in appreciation for their care of her mom and our residents during the pandemic.

- Donation from the family of Marvin Gregg of gift baskets for the GSVE Skilled Nursing Unit for staff appreciation.
- Donation from Nicole Perhach who sent in chocolates for the GSVE Skilled Nursing Unit staff .
- Numerous monetary donations from residents and community members to the Good Shepherd Communities Foundation to support our facilities during these challenging time.



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

Jennifer Davidson

Gabby Skillen

GSFH Executive Director

GSVE Health Care Administrator

Chase Executive Director