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[www.GoodShepherdCommunities.org](http://www.GoodShepherdCommunities.org)

October 1, 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](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	11	0	0	11	0	0	0	0
GSFH	10	0	3	7	0	0	0	0
GSVE	12	0	1	11	0	0	0	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	10	0	0	10	0	0	0	
GSFH	32	0	4	28	2	0	1 (repeat positive)	
GSVE	27	0	0	27	1	0	0	
Tested as of 9/16/20				9/24/20-9/30/20				
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.

**NYS DOH Mandatory Testing for all Staff: Results of week of 9/24-9/30:**

	Tested	Positive	Negative	Inconclusive or Indeterminate
GSFH	162	2 (both were repeat positives, not new cases)	160	0
GSVE	159	0	159	0
Chase	59	0	59	0

**Staff Testing 9/24/20-9/30/20**

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

*GSFH*

- No new positive staff results.

*GSVE*

- No new positive staff results.

*Chase*

- No new positive staff results.

## ***Resident Testing 9/24-9/30/20***

### ***GSFH***

- No positive resident results.

### ***Chase***

- No positive resident tests.

### ***GSVE***

- No positive resident tests.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Mass testing for SNF residents per CMS guidelines was conducted and all results are negative.

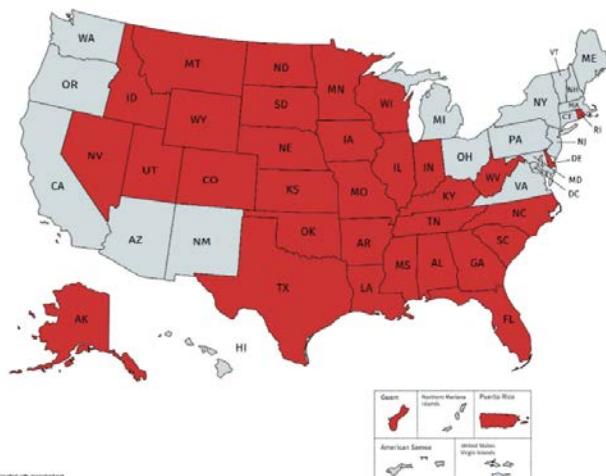
We continue to have a daily monitoring system to monitor all residents for signs/symptoms of COVID-19, as well as our daily screening for all staff.

### **GSFH ALP**

**Four residents remain in the hospital. All continue to test positive at times. While they fluctuate between positive and negative, a sustained negative response is required before they can return to GSFH.**

### **NYS Quarantine Travel Restrictions.**

The list has been revised again as of 9/29/2020 (changes in *italics*), the advisory applies to anyone traveling from Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, *Colorado*, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming, and two territories – Guam and Puerto Rico. *Arizona* and *Virginia* were 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 areas)

### **ADVOCACY CALL: Let Beautician Services Resume in SNFs and ACFs**

Beautician services (hairdressing, barber, etc.) are still not permitted under current guidance from the NYS Department of Health (DOH) unless provided by direct facility employees. Many facilities, such as GSVE and Chase, do not directly employ beauticians. Instead, these are contracted services. The current guidelines will not permit these contracted staff to enter the building even if we screen and test them as if they were our own employees.

We all know how important these services are to all of us, and our residents have been deprived of these services for 6 months. With proper social distancing and infection control practices in place, a resident of our SNF or ACF should be able access these services to enhance their self-esteem and foster mental well-being.

LeadingAge NY has drafted letters for family members to use in their advocacy, urging lawmakers to allow contract beautician services in these settings to resume. Please use this link to access these letters and advocate for these services to resume.

<https://www.leadingageny.org/advocacy/advocacy-action-items/urge-lawmakers-to-allow-beautician-services-to-resume-in-nursing-homes/>

**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, Good Shepherd Village at Endwell ALR, and Good Shepherd Village at Endwell are open for outside visitations. We are hoping to announce Good Shepherd Fairview Home ACF (ALR, EALR and ALP) in the next few days but are waiting for NYS Department of Health confirmation.

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. While we hope to avoid this outcome, 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.

**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 Bill Kelley provided cookies for the GSVE SNF staff.
- Mrs. Decker's family donated mums, min-gourds and mini-corn stalks to GSFH to decorate both inside and outside for the autumn season.

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