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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.

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.

NYS is now recommending as a best practice that a second contact for each resident be added to our notification system. This means many of you are receiving this weekly communication for the first time. Each Thursday, you can expect to receive a weekly update. Previous letters are all posted on our website.

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.

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	9	0	3	6	1	0	0	1
GSVE	11	0	1	10	1	0	0	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	10	0	0	10	0	0	0	
GSFH	29	0	4	25	3	0	0	
GSVE	26	0	0	26	1	0	0	
Tested as of 9/16/20				9/17/20-9/23/20				
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 9/17-9/23:

Mass Employee Testing

	Tested	Positive	Negative	Inconclusive or Indeterminate
GSFH	212	3 (all repeats not new cases)	209	0
GSVE	136	0	136	0
Chase	111	0	107	4

Staff Testing 9/17/20-9/23/20

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 9/17-9/23/20

GSFH

- No positive resident results.
- We conducted mass testing of all of our SNF residents, and all have come back as negative.

Chase

- No positive resident tests.

GSVE

- No positive resident tests.
- We conducted mass testing of all of our SNF residents, and all have come back as negative.

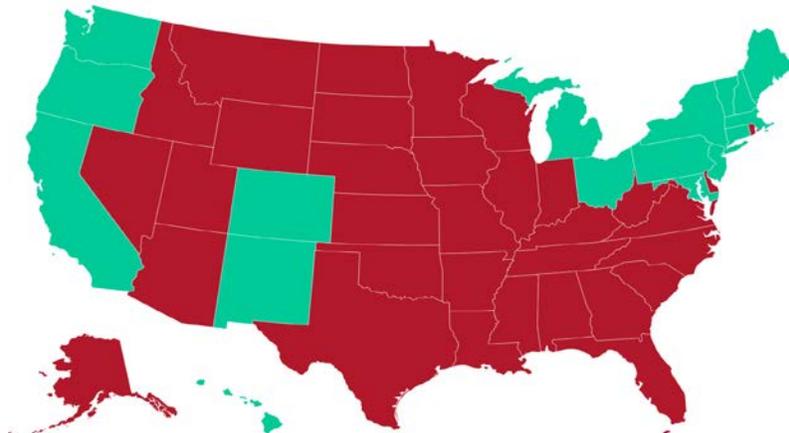
We continue to have a daily monitoring system to monitor all residents for signs/symptoms of COVID-19, as well as our daily screening for all staff.

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. Two residents on the unit who tested positive were retested after their 14 day period and both results were negative. We will retest them on Monday 9/28 to reverify the negative results.

NYS Quarantine Travel Restrictions

The list has been revised again as of 9/22/2020 (changes in italics), the advisory applies to anyone traveling from Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, *Arizona*, 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, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, *Wyoming*, and two territories – Guam and Puerto Rico. No states 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).

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?

A: We will continue to address this question each week as we believe this addresses one of the most critical challenges facing our facilities, our resident and their family members.

GSVE ALR: Open for Visitations

As we announced last week, GSVE ALR is now allowing visits outside. Our residents and their loved ones are enjoying the opportunity to see each other in person while abiding by all NYS guidelines. A few moments...



SNF Visitation

As of tomorrow, Chase Memorial is our first Skilled Nursing Facility to meet the NYS criteria for reopening. Chase staff will be contacting the resident's families and friends with more info.

As previously reported, we received notification that SNF visitation rules had been amended to require 14 days without a positive COVID case rather than 28 as previously required. This change was made for ACF\ALR previously. It is important to realize these visits will be subject to many restrictions per NYS Department of Health, and that the rules will be different for ACFs\ALRs and SNFs, which we know will be confusing. **The most important difference is that SNF visitors will be required to present a verified negative COVID test within the last week prior to their visit.** This requirement may prove burdensome for some people. To help you advocate on this issue, here is a basic "Call to Action":

Call the Governor's office TODAY and tomorrow and urge the State to take a more reasonable approach to family visitation in nursing homes. The Governor's office can be reached at this phone number: **1-518-474-8390.**

Families should speak from the heart and explain what their experience and frustrations have been, but you can use the following talking points if they are helpful:

- Due to your overly strict rules on visitation in nursing homes, I have not seen my loved one since _____.
- Now in order to visit, I must provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test result repeatedly.
- These repeated tests are not readily accessible to me and will be cost-prohibitive.
- Nursing home residents have endured months of isolation from the people they love most and are experiencing emotional distress.
- I urge you to reconsider this guidance and find a more balanced approach that considers not just the risks of COVID-19, but also the emotional isolation residents are feeling.

As we wait to open our other levels of care on all our campuses, 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:

- Mary Vivona's family brought in cupcakes for the GSVE SNF staff in honor of her birthday.
- Our GSVE IL residents made lap blankets which they donated to Chase residents.

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>

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GSFH Executive Director

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