

August 27, 2020



To All Independent Living 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  | 11               | 0                              | 0                  | 11                 | 0                   | 0             | 0                  | 0                  |
| GSFH   | 6                | 0                              | 1                  | 5                  | 2                   | 0             | 2                  | 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  | 10               | 0                              | 0                  | 10                 | 0                   | 0             | 0                  | 0                  |
| GSFH   | 22               | 0                              | 0                  | 22                 | 3                   | 0             | 2                  | 1                  |
| GSVE   | 22               | 0                              | 0                  | 22                 | 1                   | 0             | 0                  | 1                  |
| Tested as of 8/19/20   |                  |                                |                    |                    | 8/20/20-8/26/20     |               |                    |                    |

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 8/20-8/26:**

| Mass Employee Testing |        |   |          |                               |
|-----------------------|--------|---|----------|-------------------------------|
|                       | Tested | Positive  | Negative | Inconclusive or Indeterminate |
| GSFH                  | 184    | 0 (but 1 staff member was tested by another employer and tested positive) | 184      | 0                             |
| GSVE                  | 105    | 1 (retest of prior positive)  | 104      | 0                             |
| Chase                 | 97     | 3 (1 was retest of prior positive)  | 89       | 5                             |

## ***Staff Testing***

In the last round of staff testing (8/20/20-8/26/20), we had the following positive results:

### ***GSFH***

- On 8/23/20 one of our staff members who works in the ACF *tested positive for COVID-19*. The employee was tested by another employer. The employee is asymptomatic, and will self-isolate for 14 days.
  - No residents or other staff were in close contact.
- On 8/25/20 one of our staff members who works in the ACF *tested positive for COVID-19*. The employee was experiencing mild cold symptoms of dry cough, nasal congestion and mild body aches, and was tested for cause. The test was positive. They will self-isolate for 14 days.
  - No residents were in close contact with this individual. One staff member was in close contact and is experiencing some symptoms. They will self-isolate for 14 days.
- On 8/26/20 we learned one of our staff members in the ACF *tested positive for COVID-19*. The employee had been furloughed due to close contact with a positive resident then became symptomatic (cold symptoms, sore throat) and was tested by an outside provider on 8/25/20. The test was positive. They will self-isolate for 14 days.
  - No residents or other staff were in close contact with this individual as the staff member was furloughed and not in the building during their infectious period.

### ***GSVE***

- No positive results.

### ***Chase***

- Two staff members in the nursing department *tested positive for COVID-19* on 8/20/20. The employees are asymptomatic, and will self-isolate for 14 days.
  - **Second floor employee:** Six staff members were in close contact, and are following all department of health instructions regarding self-quarantine. Seventeen residents were in close contact. The entire second floor was placed on droplet precautions and all second floor residents were tested for COVID. All results were negative, and they will be retested in 14 days.
  - **First floor employee:** Four staff members were in close contact, and will be following all department of health instructions regarding self-quarantine. Thirty-five residents were in close contact. The entire first floor was placed on droplet precautions and all first floor residents were tested for COVID. All results were negative, and they will be retested in 14 days.

## ***Resident Testing 8/20-8/26***

### ***GSFH***

- On 8/20/20, one of our Adult Care Facility Assisted Living Program residents *tested positive for COVID-19*. The resident was sent to the hospital for an unrelated incident, and was tested as a precaution by the hospital. This test was positive. The resident is asymptomatic at this time, but will not return to GSFH until they have received a negative COVID test.
  - Eight staff members were in close contact, and will follow all department of health instructions regarding self-quarantine.
  - No other residents were in close contact with this resident. But as a precaution, the ALP residents were placed on droplet precautions.
- On 8/22/20 a second resident in our Adult Care Facility Assisted Living Program *tested positive for COVID-19*. The resident began displaying cold-like symptoms last Wednesday and was tested for COVID-19 on Friday. This test was positive.

- The resident had close contact with three employees. This contact was prolonged and in close proximity and therefore deemed at high risk, so the employees have been furloughed from work for 14 days and will self-isolate at home. No other residents were in close contact.
- The resident is currently confined to their room. The ALP residents had already been placed on droplet precautions earlier in the week. **But at this point we conducted mass testing for all ALP residents. As of today, 8/27/20, we have received the results back from all but one resident. We did have two additional residents test positive.** Both families have been notified. The residents are confined to their rooms. We are also doing additional precautions: All meals are being served on paper and all staff are wearing N95 masks at all times when on the ALP unit and adding face shields or goggles and gowns when in *any* resident room.
- As a further precaution, we have also conducted mass testing for residents on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the ACF, and results are pending.

*Chase:* No positive resident tests.

*GSVE:* No positive resident tests.

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***

**Details are above, but it is important to note that we have four residents from GSFH’s ALP unit who have tested positive for COVID-19, and there is one pending result from mass testing done as a precaution. In addition, three new staff cases on this unit were identified this past week. We are focusing our energies to care for these residents, and to curtail the spread within the unit and contain it. This represents our first cases of COVID-19 positive residents at any of our facilities and we take this responsibility very seriously. We understand how worried families must be, and please know we are all here to answer your questions.**

#### **NYS Quarantine Travel Restrictions- UPDATE 8/25/20**

The list has been revised again as of 8/25/20 (changes in *italics*), the advisory applies to anyone traveling from Alabama, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and *three* territories – *Guam*, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands.

*Alaska, Arizona, Delaware, Maryland and Montana were removed from the tri-state quarantine list Tuesday.*



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)

**COVID Related Costs**

Along with the obvious challenges COVID-19 has brought to long term care facilities, there are also some direct costs that will impact our facilities. Some of these may be offset by various federal programs we are receiving, but as the situation unfolds, these costs may outweigh other funding sources. To give residents and families an idea of some of the expenditures we have incurred as of the end of July:

|   | Chase             | GSFH              | GSVE              | GSC              | Total             |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| We Care differential  | \$ 111,866        | \$ 180,943        | \$ 147,968        | \$ 21,339        | \$ 462,116        |
| PPE*  | \$ 44,863         | \$ 127,436        | \$ 79,388         | \$ 1,049         | \$ 252,736        |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>\$ 156,729</b> | <b>\$ 308,379</b> | <b>\$ 227,356</b> | <b>\$ 22,388</b> | <b>\$ 714,852</b> |
| * Note: The PPE category includes purchases of masks, disinfectants, employee meals, iPads, sanitizers, gowns, gloves, negative air equipment rental, thermometers. |                   |                   |                   |                  |                   |

And we are now required by NYS to maintain a 60-day supply of PPE. We estimate the following additional expenses to do so in the month of August:

| Chase      | GSFH       | GSVE       | GSC  | Total      |
|------------|------------|------------|------|------------|
| \$ 148,437 | \$ 181,745 | \$ 107,479 | \$ - | \$ 437,661 |

As new costs continued to multiply, we felt we could no longer dedicate dollars to the “We Care” differential we had been awarding staff. The “We Care” differential was put in place when NYS was an epicenter of the pandemic, and when many businesses were closed, potentially resulting in families experiencing cash flow issues. As the prevalence of positive COVID cases in NYS has decreased dramatically and businesses have re-opened, we eliminated this differential to conserve funding for other current COVID related expenses and potential future expenses as we move into the fall and winter.

We are grateful that are Board has authorized all expenditures needed to protect our residents and staff. Whether these unbudgeted expenses were a result of a government mandate such as the required 60-day supply of PPE, the dramatically increased need for PPE, or our identification of new technologies to combat COVID such as the Solaris LytBot or the UV Light Air Purification systems, our Board has fully supported all suggestions brought forward by our management team. This is new territory for all of us. As Mike Keenan, our President\CEO put it: “In all my years in long term care, I had never proposed incurring a cost without knowing how we were going to pay for it. But in the case of COVID response, the answer has to be do what we need to do to protect our residents and staff, and we will figure the rest out later.” But the costs are mounting, and we can’t ignore this.

**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.

Last week we reported GSVE ALR was close to meeting the re-opening criteria, and that we were putting plans in place for this assuming no one tests positive prior to this. At this time we are working with NYS DOH on a reopening plan, but there is some concern that multi-level facilities may be looked at differently than stand-alone facilities. We are seeking clarification on this, and continue to revise our plan in accordance with increased and changing directives from DOH. When we receive notice of a date we will be allowed to re-open this unit, we will notify the residents and families via a separate communication.

## **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 GSFH Auxiliary is donating money for a new Therapy Hi Lo table.

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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