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

November 19, 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	13	0	0	13	0	0	0	0
GSFH	14	0	3	10 and 1 inconclusive	1	0	0	1
GSVE	18	0	3	15	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	14	0	0	14	0	0	0	
GSFH	46	0	8	38	10	0	0	
GSVE	31	0	1	30	3	0	0	
Tested as of 11/11/20				11/12/20-11/18/20				
Please note some testing was purely precautionary as the individual was asymptomatic. Ex: fall led to ER visit and tested.								
At GSVE, 3 SNF residents identified through mass testing and are not included above but are in the narrative section below								

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 11/12/20-11/18/20:**

**Mass Testing**

	Tested	Positive	Negative	Inconclusive or Indeterminate
GSFH	169	0	169	0
GSVE	140	1	139	0
Chase	110	0	110	0

**Staff Testing 11/12/20-11/18/20**

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

*GSFH:* No new positive staff results

*GSVE:*

11/15/20

- An employee in administration tested positive for COVID-19. The staff member had mild symptoms and will self-isolate for 14 days. One staff member was identified as being in close contact and will self-isolate for 14 days.

*Chase:* No new positive staff results.

**Resident Testing 11/12/20-11/18/20**

*GSFH:* No new positive resident tests.

*Chase:* No new positive resident tests.

*GSVE:*

11/12/20

- Two SNF residents tested positive for COVID-19. Both are asymptomatic. No staff or residents were identified as close contacts. All staff is utilizing full PPE for contact/droplet precautions including the use of N95 respirator masks.

11/14/20

- A Skilled Nursing resident *tested positive for COVID-19*. The resident had mild symptoms. We will continue with our mass testing of residents and staff per the CMS testing guidance. No staff or residents were identified as close contacts. All staff is utilizing full PPE for contact/droplet precautions including the use of N95 respirator masks.

11/16/20

- Two of our residents in Independent Living in the apartments have tested positive for COVID-19. The residents were symptomatic and the residents will self-isolate for 14 days. Two other IL residents were identified as close contacts. The two residents who were close contacts have been notified and will monitor for symptoms and self-isolate for 14 days. Given the increasing prevalence of COVID-19 in our local community, and this incident, in an abundance of caution, GSVE canceled all group activities, closed the Fitness Center and returned to delivery only dining for a period of 14 days. We will use technology to continue Fitness classes on Village TV. At this point, we will also continue to operate the Beauty Shop with the current restrictions in place.

11/18/20

- One of our Skilled Nursing Facility residents, who was positive for COVID 19, passed away. Although there were underlying medical conditions, if there is a COVID positive diagnosis, the cause of death is considered to be COVID-19. Our heartfelt condolences go out to this family during this very difficult time. We want to reassure all families that we are doing everything within our power to keep your loved ones safe and cared for. Our commitment to our seniors who are here at Good Shepherd Village at Endwell is the same as our commitment to our own families. This loss has been felt by all of our staff and providers.

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.

### **Salon Service**

Good Shepherd Fairview Home directly employs their beauticians and has been allowed to provide services on the units with some restrictions depending on the level of care. The week after Thanksgiving, they will be expanding this.

At Good Shepherd Village at Endwell, salon services have resumed for our ALR residents and continues in IL.

At Chase, we hope to resume services next week.

### **Cuomo Announced New Restrictions**

Since COVID cases continue to rise in NY, Governor Cuomo has initiated new restrictions for places with liquor licenses to cease operations at 10 pm, which went into effect on Friday, November 13. Restaurants are allowed to offer curbside food-only pickup after 10 pm. Also, gyms in NY have to close at 10 pm every day. New limits on the size of gatherings in homes are being implemented as well. Private residential parties now will not be permitted to have more than 10 people.

### **Microcluster Update**

Yesterday, Broome County was removed from the state's "yellow zone" designation after parts of some municipalities spent more than a month under enhanced COVID-19 restrictions.

Among the areas of Broome County that were included in the yellow zone were parts of Binghamton (including Good Shepherd Fairview Home), Johnson City, Endicott, Endwell, and parts of the towns of Union and Conklin. Those areas were grouped in that yellow cluster because they had a significantly higher positivity rate of COVID-19 cases compared to elsewhere in the county.

Because areas within the yellow zone saw a reduced positivity rate, the state removed the yellow zone designation.

### **Staff Testing**

Last week, we had indicated testing at GSFH would be twice weekly effective 11/17/20 because it was located in a yellow zone, and NYS requires twice weekly testing in that designation. Yesterday, that designation was removed for Broome County, so GSFH will be conducting weekly testing.

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

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced new guidelines allowing out-of-state travelers to New York to "test out" of the mandatory 14-day quarantine. Travelers from states that are contiguous with New York will continue to be exempt from the travel advisory; however, covered travelers must continue to fill out the [Traveler Health Form](#). Essential workers will continue to be exempt as well. The new protocol was effective Wednesday, November 4.

For any traveler to New York State from out of state, exempting the contiguous states, the new guidelines for travelers to test-out of the mandatory 14-day quarantine are below:

- For travelers who were in another state for more than 24 hours:
  - Travelers must obtain a test within three days of departure from that state.
  - The traveler must, upon arrival in New York, quarantine for three days.
  - On day 4 of their quarantine, the traveler must obtain seek another COVID test. If both tests come back negative, the traveler may exit quarantine early upon receipt of the second negative diagnostic test.
  
- For travelers who were in another state for less than 24 hours:
  - The traveler does not need a test prior to their departure from the other state, and does not need to quarantine upon arrival in New York State.
  - However, the traveler must fill out the traveler information form upon entry into New York State, and take a COVID diagnostic test 4 days after their arrival in New York.

Local health departments will validate tests, if necessary, and if a test comes back positive, will issue isolation orders and initiate contact tracing. The local health department must make contact with the state the traveler came from, to ensure contact tracing proceeds there as well. All travelers must continue to fill out the traveler information form upon arrival into New York State to contribute to New York State's robust contact tracing program.

**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 and Good Shepherd Fairview Home ACF (ALR, EALR, and ALP) and SNF are open for visitation.

Good Shepherd Village at Endwell Skilled Nursing Facility and Assisted Living (ALR,SNALR, and EALR) are required to pause visitation due to recent positive COVID test results.

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. 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.

**Please remember that NYS DOH has very strict guidelines on how we structure our visitations. Social distancing is absolutely required. If visitors do not comply with these guidelines, the visitor will be asked to leave and may not be allowed to return depending on the nature of the violation. These guidelines are for the protection of our residents, and we ask everyone to comply.**

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:

- Good Shepherd Fairview Home sent Good Shepherd Village at Endwell a box of brownies from Fairytale Brownies for being "Health Care Heroes"

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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