



May1, 2020

Dear Residents, Families, Friends and other stakeholders,

Its hard to believe that our Day Programs have been closed since March 17, 2020 and we have been battling this virus for six weeks now. The governor has extended the stay at home order until March 18, 2020. As we get closer to that date, we should get more information on a plan to either continue the restrictions or to reopen the state. WSC cannot make a decision on reopening our Day Services until we receive more guidance. That being said I would say we will not be looking at any reopening until at least the end of May.

WSC to date we have 17 resident and multiple staff test positive for COVID-19. 3 residents are hospitalized, 14 residents are being cared for at home because they have returned cleared from treatment, are asymptomatic or have mild symptoms. Homes currently dealing with active positive diagnosis are Shea Complex, Walnut Rd, Jackson Rd, 116 Broadway, 464 Broadway and 25 Bonair.

As mobile testing and staff pop-up testing sites become more available, we expect to continue to see an increase in the number of people tested and receiving positive results. Currently, we are waiting for results for residents at 4 homes. In some cases, the PCP has arranged testing or order monitoring in place of testing.

WSC continues to work to obtaining Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Fortunately, currently we have been able to secure the PPE that we need to protect staff. We have ample gloves, surgical masks, KN95 masks and gowns.

As of pay period starting 4/5 WSC is offering premium pay during the COVID pandemic crisis. This pay will continue for the foreseeable future. We are implementing this to help reward our dedicated staff!

Many of our residents are elderly and may have medical conditions putting them at a higher risk of becoming sick. Healthcare personnel (HCP) are the most likely sources of introduction of the virus that causes COVID-19 into our homes. To protect our vulnerable residents, we are continuing to follow actions to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in our residents and staff:

- Effective April 9, 2020 WSC will only use relief agency staff if all other staffing options have been exhausted.
- Effective 3/31 all staff are being asked to wear masks both at the work location and in public spaces when conducting company business.
- Effective April 1, 2020 all persons in the building need to be wearing a mask at all times.
- Effective March 17, 2020 we closed our Day Programs. Those programs will remain closed until further notice. We expect them to be closed at least until the state of emergency/stay at home order is lifted.
- Effective March 17, 2020 we have limited access to 291 Mystic Ave to workers that are considered essential to our operations. All non-essential activities have been postponed.
- Effective March 17, 2020 all visitation is being restricted except for certain compassionate care situations, such as VNA or end of life situations.

- We know that your presence is important for your loved one but, per guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), this is a necessary action to protect their health. We are recommending alternative methods of visitation (such as Skype and FaceTime) so that you can continue to communicate with your loved ones.
- Visitors who are permitted to enter homes will be required to frequently clean their hands, limit their visit to a designated area within the building, and wear a facemask. As the situation with COVID-19 is rapidly changing, we will continue to keep you updated.
- We are monitoring healthcare personnel and residents for symptoms of respiratory illness. Healthcare personnel will be actively monitored for fever and symptoms of respiratory infection. Ill healthcare personnel will be asked to stay home. You may see healthcare personnel wearing facemasks and gloves in order to prevent germs from spreading and help keep residents safe. Healthcare personnel will clean their hands frequently. We are assessing residents daily for fevers and symptoms of respiratory infection in order to quickly identify ill residents and implement additional infection prevention activities.
- When ill residents are identified, they will be monitored closely, asked to stay in their rooms and/or wear a mask. Also, their PCP will be contacted ASAP.
- We are limiting activities within residences. We are cancelling all group activities and all community outings. We will be helping residents to practice social distancing, including during meals, and to frequently clean their hands. We encourage you to review the CDC website for information about COVID-19, including its symptoms, how it spreads, and actions you can take to protect your health:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>

Attached are two protocols that went out earlier this week: 1) Isolation practices protocol and 2) Employee work/return to work during COVID protocols.

Thank you very much for everything you are doing to keep our residents and facility staff safe and healthy. We will continue to monitor the situation in our community and keep you informed.

Carolyne Guffey, M.B.A., PHR  
Executive Director  
291 Mystic Ave.  
Medford MA. 02155  
617-629-3562  
guffeyc@wscinc.org