

Date: January 5, 2021
To: Residents, Families, and Friends
From: Gustave (Gus) Keach-Longo, President/CEO

RE: **COVID-19 Update**

Vaccine for COVID-19

The vaccine's availability is a turning point for our COVID-19 response efforts here at The Towers. If 2020 has taught us anything, it is to plan ahead and remain flexible—as things may change daily. Below is our plan going forward—our best guess based on what we know today. As always, we will adjust as we learn more and will keep you in the loop as we figure things out. I am openly sharing this with you because I believe the more we all know, the better. We must continue working together for all of us to share a better 2021 and beyond.



The approval of two new vaccines means that we now have more “tools in our toolbox” to combat the threat of the virus. Pfizer vaccine has been chosen by CT Department of Public Health for nursing homes/care center and assisted livings. Thousands of individuals living or working in Connecticut’s 200+ nursing homes received their first vaccine shots. Nursing home vaccinations (round 1) should be by this weekend. The next priority is assisted livings (us), so we are drafting our plans on how we will roll out the vaccines at The Towers as well as how we see the first half of 2021 at The Towers. A few assisted livings are starting their vaccines this week. It is likely that we will be scheduled for next week or at least by the week of the 18th. We are meeting with our Walgreens COVID Vaccine Coordinator tomorrow (1/6/21) to work out details of when we will offer the vaccine on-site at The Towers and the required paperwork.

Our Plan (so far)...

January 2021

- First round of vaccines will be offered. We will send out detailed information regarding vaccines at The Towers within the next few days once we work out the rest of the details
- We continue working together to flattening the “Holiday Curve” by suspending gatherings and restricting visitors from December 28th to approximately January 18th

January-March 2021

- Covid-19 testing continues weekly
- Approximately early February second round of vaccines are offered to those who received the first round of vaccine at The Towers. Individuals (residents or caregivers/team members) who were not given the vaccine in January receive their first vaccine shot on this same day
- Second round of shots are approximately 21 days after the first shot, so first groups would be fully vaccinated by the end of February. Second groups may complete vaccinations in March.
- Please note: from what we are learning, it is likely that if individuals choose to not be vaccinated during these two rounds of shots, they may need to wait until late summer or fall to have another opportunity to receive the vaccine at a site unrelated to The Towers.
- We hear that side effects of the vaccine (e.g. general feeling of sickness for 1-2 days) are mild after the first shot and maybe a bit stronger after the second shot
- Full protective effect of the vaccine occurs approximately 10 days after the second vaccine shot
- By March 31st, all individuals receiving the vaccine at The Towers should be fully vaccinated

April 2021

- Covid-19 testing protocols will be reviewed and updated based on information available at that time—this may include reducing frequency of testing due to availability of vaccinations
- On or about April 1st, The Towers implements protocols to only allow individuals (i.e. team members, caregivers, family members, visitors, volunteers) who have been fully vaccinated (two shots). Everyone vaccinated at The Towers by Walgreens will be placed on our “Cleared to Enter” list at our entrances
- Residents always have access to The Towers and their apartments—regardless of their vaccination status

- Vaccination cards are being issued to individuals when the first vaccine shot is administered. The cards are updated on the day of the second dose. Individuals not vaccinated at The Towers will need to show their vaccination cards to be placed on the “Cleared to Enter” list and gain access to the building. A vaccination card will only need to be shown once to be placed on the list
- Residents and their responsible parties are strongly encouraged to develop backup plans for the resident to continue receiving support services in the case where the caregiver is not vaccinated and not able to enter the building

May-July 2021

- If our community actively accepts the vaccines when offered and our protocols in April work as we anticipate, we expect being able to get to a reasonable level of herd immunity (i.e. 80% or more of all individuals within our building are vaccinated).
- If we reach a reasonable level of herd immunity within The Towers, we will begin transitioning to reopening our café in May
- Plans are being developed to begin a “soft reopening” of our café once we determine our level of herd immunity is established. This would mean that the capacity of our café would be restricted to approximately ¼ of our regular café’s capacity. We plan a slow and gradual increase of seating throughout May and June.
- The Dining Room may begin a “soft reopening” in late June or July depending on our evaluation of May/June.

Once vaccinated, the chance of contracting the virus is significantly lowered. However, there continues to be a few key concerns that will be closely monitored as we move forward:

- How long will the vaccine remain effective is unknown
- A small percentage of people (approximately 5%) may still contract the virus
- If the virus is contracted by a vaccinated person, it is still not known how severe the signs/symptoms of the virus if contracted may be
- It is not known if a vaccinated person could be considered contagious to others—even when not personally infected

As I shared in my last memorandum, the CDC recommends that people who have had COVID-19 should still get the vaccine, even though there is a 90-day period when a person is not likely to contract a second case. Therefore, it is important that even people who have recovered from COVID-19 receive the vaccine. It does not matter if a person’s COVID case was symptomatic or asymptomatic.

If a person has experienced a recent “significant exposure” to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 and is quarantining, the person should wait until after the 14 day quarantine period is complete to receive the first shot.

The Towers' "Herd Immunity" Goal

Our goal over the next few months is to establish a "herd immunity" here at The Towers. "Herd immunity" is when enough people are vaccinated to make it difficult for a virus to spread to new "hosts." If we can reach at least 80% of the individuals within The Towers being vaccinated, we will greatly reduce the chances of the virus spreading within our building. With 80% of everyone vaccinated (residents, caregiver, team members, family members, visitors, volunteers), if brought into the building, the virus will have almost no one else to infect.

To reach the point of herd immunity as quickly as possible at The Towers, it is critical that everyone possible be vaccinated. Therefore, I am mandating that all team members of The Towers and all our partners (e.g. Morrison, Utopia Assisted Living/Home Care, Heritage HealthPro, New England Medical Group and others) receive the COVID-19 vaccine by March 31st. There are a few exceptions as required by law. Anyone on The Towers team concerned that he/she is unable to take the vaccine, please contact our Director of Human Resources, Glenn Gordon at extension 291. Any team members employed by one of our partners, please contact your supervisor and/or company's Human Resources Department. Caregivers, family members, visitors or volunteers who are unable to take the vaccine, please contact our Director of Support Services, Dawn Staton at extension 140. Once we reach the point of herd immunity, our residents will be much safer overall and life at The Towers will start to slowly transition back to some form of "normal."



I'm taking the shots for you, will you take them for me?

Though I strongly encourage all our residents to receive the vaccine and have shared that I personally will be taking the vaccine, our residents are not legally required to accept the vaccine. At this time, we have an average of 40 residents who continue to not be tested each week for the COVID-19 virus. I would anticipate that those residents are also unlikely to receive the vaccine once offered. For those who choose not be vaccinated, I respect your own choice but am seriously concerned for your safety long term. As you weigh the risks of your decision, please consider that throughout 2021 The Towers will adjust our COVID-19 protocols based on our achieved level of herd immunity. This means that as soon as it is reasonably safe to do so, our protocols will become less restrictive and our community will



be able to slowly open up more. If you are not vaccinated, your personal risk of exposure to the virus will likely increase by the end of 2021.

Again, please—think about it. You are welcome to leave me your thoughts by dropping notes in “Notes to Gus” boxes or calling and leaving me a voice message. I’m taking the shots for you, will you take them for me?

Remember to Stay 1 “GUS” Apart

Remember, COVID-19 cases are on the rise all around us and we expect it to be even greater after the recent holidays.

Staying Strong, Staying Safe and Staying Connected! -- Gus