

Date: January 8, 2021
To: Residents, Families, and Friends
From: Gustave (Gus) Keach-Longo, President/CEO

RE: **COVID-19 Update**

The Vaccine

We are using the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine as this was the one approved by the CT Department of Public Health for long term care facilities. We have consulted with infectious disease professionals at the Yale School of Medicine to learn as much as we can about the vaccine. Below is some of what we have learned:

- To develop the best immunity through the vaccine, two doses are required administered 21 days apart.
- There are 4 days of latitude on either side of the 21st day. This is helpful in cases where receiving the second dose on the actual 21st day is not possible.
- After the first dose, it is estimated that immunity is approximately 80 percent effective. It is common for minor side effects, like sore arm or feeling tired.
- After the second dose is received, immunity is estimated to be approximately 95 percent effective. Side effects are reported to be slightly stronger, but dissipate within 1 or 2 days.
- It takes approximately 10 days after the second dose is received to reach maximum immunity of 95 percent.

The Towers has no direct connection with vaccine maintenance or administration. Walgreens is solely responsible for the ordering, administering and tracking of the vaccine. A Pfizer employee contracted by Walgreens is responsible for storing and transporting of the vaccine directly to Walgreens staff. We have no connection with Pfizer and our connection with Walgreens is specifically to enable our residents, caregivers and team members access to the vaccine onsite and as early as possible.

Who SHOULD NOT take the Vaccine

It is always best to contact your primary care physician to discuss your personal health situation and your specific benefits and risks of taking the vaccine. However, this is what we have learned:

- Individuals who are currently COVID-19 positive
 - Wait until no longer positive and up to 90 days from first signs/symptoms
- Individuals who have had a significant exposure and are in quarantine (14 days)
- Individuals who have received any other vaccine within the prior 4 weeks

COVID-19 Vaccine Plan

Vaccinations will be offered over a seven-week period in January and February. There will be three “vaccine weeks.” One week in January and two weeks in February. This enables all residents’ two opportunities to receive both doses space out properly so they become fully vaccinated. This plan also ensures that all individuals who are mandated to receive the vaccine, because they work at The Towers, to have the opportunity to be fully vaccinated by the end of February.

Walgreens Vaccine Consent Form

Consent forms to receive the vaccine are not legally required due to the national and state Declarations of Emergency. However, Walgreens’ protocol is to obtain a signed form prior to each vaccine dose being administered. Therefore, each person receiving the two vaccine doses will be required to complete and sign the forms twice.

A “Vaccine Administration Record” form will be completed and signed the day the vaccine is administered. Residents who receive the assistance of a Power of Attorney (POA) or Conservator, please know that all POAs and Conservators have received copies of the form from their residents’ Resident Services Coordinator (RSC)s and are asked to return them to our team immediately. We will work with the POAs and Conservators to make sure consent is settled prior to the day of vaccinations.

Individuals receiving the vaccines in the Dining Room will be asked to complete the forms the day of their vaccinations. Please bring insurance cards. There is no out-of-pocket costs. Walgreens will bill insurances directly or receive reimbursement through the state or federal government.

Proof of Vaccination

Each person will receive a vaccination card from Walgreens after the first dose of the vaccine is administered. The card will show your name and the date that the first dose was received by you.

Please keep the card in a safe place so that you have it on the day of the second vaccine dose. If you have it available, Walgreens will update your card to show the date the second dose of the vaccine was administered.

It would be good to keep your COVID-19 vaccination card safe. You may need it in the future to show your doctor. It is possible that you may need it to access other places outside of The Towers if organizations start requiring proof of vaccination to enter their buildings.

Week 1: January 12th, 13th and 14th

**Tuesday,
January 12th: Residents Only, Dose #1**

Location: Apartments Only 9:00a.m. to 8:00p.m.

Walgreens pharmacists, their assistants and Towers' staff visit each resident apartment.

Residents need to be observed for 15-30 minutes after the shot; resident apartment doors will remain propped open while Walgreens staff will remain on each floor so that residents are observed for the proper amount of time.

COVID TESTING – Employees Only, Dining Room – 8:30 am – 6:00 pm

As regularly scheduled, Murphy Medical Associates will be in the Dining Room providing COVID-19 **testing** to all employees.

Note: Residents have the right to refuse the vaccine. If the vaccine is not received at The Towers, residents will likely not have an opportunity to receive the vaccine until late summer or fall. Vaccines will not be offered through The Towers after February.

**Wednesday,
January 13th: Caregivers** NOT contracted with The Towers, Dose #1**
(e.g. private duty aides, non-Utopia aides, family caregivers)

** Caregivers (e.g. family caregivers) must have been performing tasks for our residents within our building over the past several weeks and already being tested weekly. This ensures that we respect CT's vaccine rollout plan.

Location: Dining Room Only: 9:00 a.m. to 7:30p.m.

Caregivers who were not able to test with Murphy Medical Associates on Tuesday can come in to be COVID tested and then follow the posted directions to the Walgreens registration table. You will be instructed how to fill out the consent form and then receive the vaccine.

After the vaccination, all individuals need to wait at least 15 minutes to be observed by Walgreens to ensure you have no immediate reaction to the vaccine. Please plan to remain in the waiting area for 15 minutes before leaving.

We plan to test and vaccinate approximately 250-300 people this day; busiest times are usually 9a, 12n and 4p. Therefore, if possible, plan to come at other times and schedule 1 to 1.5 hours.

COVID-19 TESTING—Resident Apartments, 8:30 am–4:00 pm

As regularly scheduled, Murphy Medical Associates will be in The Towers providing COVID-19 **testing** to all residents.

**Thursday,
January 14th:**

Team Members from The Towers, Utopia Assisted Living/Home Care, Morrison, NEMG, Heritage HealthPro, Quinnipiac University and Towers' volunteers*

* Volunteers must have been performing tasks within our building over the past several weeks and already being tested weekly. This ensures that we follow the CT Department of Public Health's definition of "volunteer" and respect CT's vaccine rollout plan.

Location: Dining Room Only 9:00 a.m. to 7:30p.m.

Follow the posted directions to the Walgreens registration table. You will be instructed how to fill out the consent form and then receive the vaccination.

After the vaccination, all individuals need to wait at least 15 minutes to be observed by Walgreens to ensure you have no immediate reaction to the vaccine. Please plan to remain in the waiting area for 15 minutes before leaving.

We plan to vaccinate approximately 250-300 people this day; busiest times are usually 9a, 12n and 4p. Therefore, if possible, plan to come at other times and schedule 1 to 1.5 hours.

Week 2: February 2nd, 3rd and 4th

**Tuesday,
February 2nd: Residents Only, Dose #2**

Location: Apartments Only 9:00a.m. to 8:00p.m.

Walgreens pharmacists, their assistants and Towers' staff visit each resident apartment.

Residents need to be observed for 15-30 minutes after the shot; resident apartment doors will remain propped open while Walgreens staff will remain on each floor so that residents are observed for the proper amount of time.

Employees Only, Dining Room – 8:30 am – 6:00 pm

As regularly scheduled, Murphy Medical Associates will be in the Dining Room providing COVID-19 **testing** to all employees.

Note: Residents have the right to refuse the vaccine. If the vaccine is not received at The Towers, residents will likely not have an opportunity to receive the vaccine until late summer or fall. Vaccines will not be offered through The Towers after February.

**Wednesday,
February 3rd: Caregivers** NOT contracted with The Towers, Dose #2**
(e.g. private duty aides, non-Utopia aides, family caregivers)

** Caregivers (e.g. family caregivers) must have been performing tasks for our residents within our building over the past several weeks and already being tested weekly. This ensures that we respect CT's vaccine rollout plan.

Location: Dining Room Only: 9:00 a.m. to 7:30p.m.

Caregivers who were not able to test with Murphy Medical Associates on Tuesday can come in to be tested and then follow the posted directions to the Walgreens registration table. You will be instructed how to fill out the consent form and then receive the vaccination.

After the vaccination, all individuals need to wait at least 15 minutes to be observed by Walgreens to ensure you have no immediate reaction to the vaccine. Please plan to remain in the waiting area for 15 minutes before leaving.

We plan to test and vaccinate approximately 250-300 people this day; busiest times are usually 9a, 12n and 4p. Therefore, if possible, plan to come at other times and schedule 1 to 1.5 hours.

COVID-19 TESTING–Resident Apartments – 8:30 am – 4:00 pm

As regularly scheduled, Murphy Medical Associates will be in The Towers providing COVID-19 **testing** to all residents.

**Thursday,
February 4th:**

Team Members from The Towers, Utopia Assisted Living/Home Care, Morrison, NEMG, Heritage HealthPro, Quinnipiac University and Towers' Volunteers*, Dose 2

* Volunteers must have been performing tasks within our building over the past several weeks and already being tested weekly. This ensures that we follow the CT Department of Public Health's definition of "volunteer" and respect CT's vaccine rollout plan.

Location: Dining Room Only 9:00 a.m. to 7:30p.m.

Follow the posted directions to the Walgreens registration table. You will be instructed how to fill out the consent form and then receive the vaccination.

After the vaccination, all individuals need to wait at least 15 minutes to be observed by Walgreens to ensure you have no immediate reaction to the vaccine. Please plan to remain in the waiting area for 15 minutes before leaving.

We plan to vaccinate approximately 250-300 people this day; busiest times are usually 9a, 12n and 4p. Therefore, if possible, plan to come at other times and schedule 1 to 1.5 hours.

Week 3: February 23rd and 24th

**Tuesday,
February 23rd Residents Only, Dose #2**

Location: Apartments Only 9:00a.m. to 8:00p.m.

Walgreens pharmacists, their assistants and Towers' staff visit each resident apartment.

Residents need to be observed for 15-30 minutes after the shot; resident apartment doors will remain propped open while Walgreens staff will remain on each floor so that residents are observed for the proper amount of time.

Employees Only, Dining Room – 8:30 am – 6:00 pm

As regularly scheduled, Murphy Medical Associates will be in the Dining Room providing COVID-19 **testing** to all employees.

Note: Dose #1 will not be available on these days, as there will be no vaccines available to The Towers after February 24.

**Wednesday,
February 24th Anyone In Need of Dose # 2**

Location: Dining Room Only 9:00 a.m. to 7:30p.m.

Walgreens will be in the Dining Room to offer the final dose to anyone who needs their dose #2. This will be the last time COVID-19 vaccine is offered at The Towers.

Note: As regularly scheduled, Murphy Medical Associates will be in The Towers providing COVID-19 **testing** to all residents in their apartments.

As regularly scheduled, Murphy Medical Associates will be in the Dining Room providing COVID-19 **testing** to caregivers and team members unrelated to vaccinations.

Be Extra Kind, Extra Gentle, Extra Flexible

Our plan includes vaccinating approximately 600 people with two doses of the vaccine over seven weeks. Though we will do our very best to be as organized and quick as possible, we know that we cannot fully avoid some mishaps. As with all our efforts through 2020, this too is new for all of us. Please remember, the first time we tested everyone for COVID-19 at The Towers, it took us four full days. Though we may now have a very smooth system for testing everyone, we can easily forget that it took an extreme effort of our team working alongside Murphy Medical Associates to make testing as easy as possible for all of us.

We are learning that for many people who received their first dose of the vaccine, they are surprised by their own emotional experience. People often feel nervous, worried and a bit stressed as they wait their turn. Then, many feel a surprising sense of relief and even cry. This is fully understandable given the year we have all experienced.

As we do our best to organize a way to vaccinate our community, I am asking each of you to put in extra effort to be gentle with each other and to remain flexible throughout the process. Let's all agree to be extra kind, extra gentle and extra flexible.

Remember to Stay 1 "GUS" Apart

Remember, COVID-19 cases are expected to rise next week. Please be extra careful.

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