

Date: December 1, 2020
To: Residents, Families, and Friends
From: Gustave (Gus) Keach-Longo, President/CEO

RE: **COVID-19 Update**

Thanksgiving-Post

We learned that only 15 to 20 residents went out for Thanksgiving this year. Thank you to everyone who remained home and stayed extra cautious this year. For those who did leave, please remain in your apartments and be tested on schedule this week and next. Big “shout out” to our wonderful Dining Services Team. Thanks for making a wonderful meal for us!!

Positive COVID-19 Tests

Over the past few weeks we have continued to experience approximately 5 new Covid-19 cases each week. New cases continue to be among caregivers/family members and a few team members. Thankfully, cases among our residents remain very low despite some residents having been exposed to the virus through caregivers/family members.



Vaccine for COVID-19

Information on the potential distribution of a vaccine is evolving. This is what we know thus far:

- At this time there are two vaccines submitted to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for review and potential approval. The first is scheduled for review on December 10th—the first night of Hanukkah. It is reasonable to believe that one or both may be approved by the FDA this month.
- Currently, there are discussions regarding the order by which individuals will be provided the vaccine. From my understanding, the focus is on the first three groups of priority. It is likely that the first will be health care workers, second could be seniors in care centers (this may include assisted livings) and the third group could be first responders (e.g. police, fire fighters, etc.). We have no way to know when the vaccine will be available to us at The Towers. It is reasonable to guess that it would be late winter (February/March).

- We have signed up with Walgreens to be our vaccine distribution partner. Walgreens is currently ramping up their plans for how they will roll out how they will handle the volume of vaccine administration. Walgreens is also developing education materials for those who will be vaccinated by them. We will work closely with Walgreens to coordinate the logistics of providing the vaccine on-site at The Towers. I will keep you in the loop as our plans develop.
- According to the information available, we understand that there are some mild side effects often experienced for a couple of days after receiving the vaccine. They are similar to the side effects experienced when one receives the shingles vaccine:
 - Pain, redness, swelling at injection site
 - Muscle pain
 - Tiredness
 - Headache
 - Shivering
 - Fever
 - Upset stomach

Since some of these side effects are similar to symptoms of COVID-19, people may become worried that they have contracted the COVID-19 virus. That is not the case.

Post-Vaccine at The Towers

Though we hope that the vaccines will be available soon, distributed widely and rapidly and be highly effective, we should remember how vaccines work. Vaccines do not make a person immune from catching the virus. They prepare a person's immune system to effectively fight the virus once the virus is introduced to the body. So, risk of exposure remains a real concern even after the vaccine is distributed within The Towers. People who become exposed to the virus may still become ill. The reason for the vaccine is to help make the severity of illness less than if exposed without having been vaccinated. So, if exposed, we could become fairly sick for a while. However, it may not be as bad and, ultimately, we are much less likely to experience severe illness.

From what we know, the vaccines being considered have an approximate 95% efficacy rate from the studies conducted so far. Statistically, that is great news. However, for our specific community, that means that even if every resident elects to be vaccinated, as many as 15 residents may not experience the benefits of the vaccine and may truly struggle. So, I hope that everyone chooses to take a COVID 19 vaccine, when available. It is our best chance of remaining healthy even after a possible exposure.

Staying Strong, Staying Safe and Staying Connected! - Gus