

Date: March 2, 2021
To: Residents, Families, and Friends
From: Gustave (Gus) Keach-Longo, President/CEO

RE: **COVID-19 Update**

93%

Herd Immunity “Bubble” at The Towers

I am so excited and PROUD of our community. We have reached 93% of our entire community (i.e. residents, caregivers and team members) fully vaccinated! Go Towers! Though I am waiting on the final total, we estimate that Walgreens vaccinated approximately 650 people at The Towers! Though there are some minor idiosyncrasies related to our information (e.g. residents moving in/out and in rehab), our records show that only 43 residents did not take the shots. That is consistent with the approximate number of residents who refuse testing each week. Despite this fact, this is truly amazing folks! I spent the past few months hoping/praying that we would reach at least 80% and was really wishing for 85%. We truly “rolled up our sleeves” for one another. Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!

We are Moving Forward Carefully

As of March 6th, we will have reached 10 days post the second shot of the second round of vaccinations. The 10th to 14th day is when the protection of the vaccine is expected to be its strongest. Therefore, we are starting to slowly and carefully reopen our common areas on our ground floor. I know we are eager to feel a little “normal” after the year.



As we start to gather again, masks are to be worn by everyone at all times. No food or drinks should be consumed while with others, so that masks can remain on and cover our cute noses.

The one “GUS” apart protocol remains in effect for the next several months.

**Great “Men’s Group” Sal.
It’s good to see the “guys”
together again!**

Next week we will begin returning furniture to our lounge in the Tower East side of our building. We will also return some furniture near the entrance of our Tower One side. The furniture may be set up differently than in the past. The couches/love seats will not be used—as they encourage people to sit too close. Remember, if I cannot lay down between you and your friend (without touching both of you)—you are too close.

Please remember that the higher risk activities are those that require us to remove our masks (e.g. eating). Also a very high risk activity is when we need to project our voices (e.g. singing). As we start to reopen, we must be careful to not just let our guard down and go back to full “normal.” We have this “gift” of having 93% of us vaccinated. That means that our risk is much lower now, but there is still enough risk that we need to be smart about our actions for the next several months.

We will not be restarting our Choir and Chorus programs until the fall (at the earliest). Who would have ever imagined that the joy of singing could be a high-risk activity?

Unfortunately, it is one of the riskiest things we could do because it can easily spread respiratory droplets. Since I often still need to remind my friends to cover their noses as I walk around, I believe that our singers may struggle with consistently wearing their masks. This is not a risk I am willing to take at this time. Hang in there folks. Singing together will return to The Towers, we just need to wait until we are past this safely.



A few of our friends “chattin it up” at “Klaatch”

We are waiting until May to begin reopening our dining venues. We will start in the Café with only a couple of tables spread several “GUS”s apart. While doing so, we will monitor our community for any COVID cases. Our main Dining Room may open in June depending on how things go with dining in our Café. Vinny, our Director of Dining Services, is developing our plan based on information obtained from other communities within the Morrison network. We will let you know more as we figure this out.

We will keep the Tower East Meeting Room closed for at least a couple more months. This room is needed for our team members to have enough space to social distance during their breaks and lunches. The room they traditionally use is considered too small to allow for social distancing while they have their masks off and eat.

Testing

Weekly testing for COVID-19 will remain until at least the end of April. Our tests will detect the South African and the United Kingdom variants/mutations. This allows us to more effectively continue monitoring for COVID cases as we start to reopen our community spaces.

Entry into The Towers

To ensure we are following the CT Department of Public Health (DPH)'s requirements, we will continue to require a negative test administered within the prior test days to enter our building. This remains our protocol even for those who have been fully vaccinated. As stated above, the weekly testing enables us to diligently monitor and have early detection of any possible cases of the variant strains. Our protocols may be adjusted in May depending on what we learn from DPH.



**Michael, someday I feel the way you look...
Thanks for the balloon animals!**

Always remember to Stay a "GUS" apart and cover your button noses!!

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