



May 13, 2020

Dear family member,

I am happy to report that our “window visits” have been a great success with both elders and families and we are continuing both the window visits and virtual visiting on a daily basis. I am also very happy to tell you that our numbers continue to trend in the right direction. We currently have just one active case of COVID-19 at the Jewish Home at Rockleigh and two cases at Jewish Home Assisted Living. On the Rockleigh campus, we have admitted elders with COVID from the hospitals and there are 12 people in that count, with seven well on the road to recovery at this point.

The one major development that has taken place in the last 24 hours has been the Governor’s Executive Order mandating testing of all residents and staff in nursing homes and assisted living facilities in New Jersey. This testing is required to be completed by May 26, 2020. We have a number of questions, as do our colleagues, about the specifics of this mandate but as of this writing no guidance has been available from the Department of Health.

We have, however, not waited for the complete guidance to get our plans created and begin implementation of those plans. We will begin by testing any elder, on either campus, who has not had COVID-19, meaning that they have either not been tested or not tested positive. If an elder previously tested negative they will need to be retested at this time. If an elder tests positive, they will immediately be moved to an isolation area at the Jewish Home at Rockleigh or isolated in their apartment at Jewish Home Assisted Living. Even if they do not have symptoms, the regulation requires an isolation and monitoring period of 10 days. If the elder tests negative, they are required to be retested within 3-7 days following the initial results. All families whose loved one will be tested will be contacted directly as this moves forward.

Testing of staff will begin before the week is out and we will be setting up testing stations in both buildings that will be staffed by teams of nurses to enable us to complete the process as swiftly and efficiently as possible. Staff who do not have symptoms will be allowed to work (with proper PPE) pending their results. Anyone who tests positive will be required to be in home quarantine for a period of 10 days. Anyone who tests negative will be retested within 3-7 days following the initial results. Should a staff member refuse to be tested, they will be placed on an unpaid leave of absence until such time as they are willing to undergo the required testing.

We do have back up plans in the event that there are staff members who must go out and we are completely prepared should we need to place any elders in isolation. We have been fortunate to have identified a private lab that has supplied all of our testing needs to date and is able to ship us a sufficient number of test kits to meet this new requirement.

As we say here daily, the key thing right now is to continue to keep our guard up, continue to use PPE effectively and to focus on infection control. We also continue our heightened cleaning and sanitizing of both buildings, using not only cleaning and disinfecting chemicals but also rechecking every area using a special black light to ensure that nothing has been missed. We are urging our staff, and all of you as well, to continue to be vigilant as well. This is not the time to stop wearing masks and practicing good infection control, especially handwashing. Please take care of yourselves too!

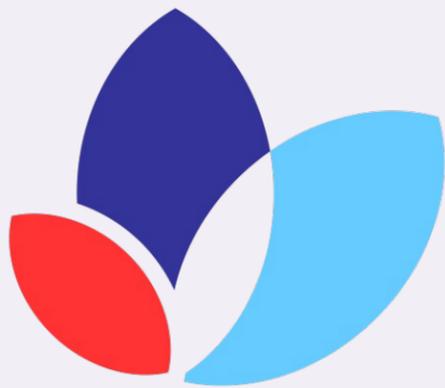
Be well and stay strong,



Carol Silver Elliott
President and CEO
The Jewish Home Family



Dr. Harvey Gross
Medical Director
The Jewish Home Family



The Jewish
Home Family

Advancing the Art of Living.

