



August 28, 2020

Dear Residents, Family Members and Staff Members,

Once again, we gratefully report no new cases of COVID-19 for all members of our community. Residents were tested on August 24 and employees on August 24 and 25.

With our most recent positive case on August 5 for a resident in skilled nursing care, Mercy Circle has achieved 22 consecutive days with no new incidences of the virus among our residents. Currently, Mercy Circle has moved to CMS Phase Two.

Next week, we will apply to the Illinois Department of Public Health for CMS Phase Three status. We already submitted our plans to Trinity Health for approval to reopen the dining rooms and salons. Until we secure approval, we will continue to deliver meals to assisted living, memory care and skilled nursing care residents so they can dine in their rooms. And independent living residents continue to pick-up their meals from their dining room.

We continue to adhere to our weekly testing plan for all staff members and for residents in our assisted living, memory care and skilled nursing care units. Mercy Circle has an adequate inventory of all PPE equipment and all infection control and prevention practices in place.

Visits with family and friends

Meeting all the criteria for CMS Phase Two designated by IDPH and the Chicago Department of Public Health, we are continuing

- Outdoor visitations for all assisted living, memory care and skilled nursing care residents on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, for 1-hour time slots between 1pm and 4pm, in the Courtyard the Sisters of Mercy have reserved for our exclusive use
- Visitors currently must
 - Be limited to two people 18-years and older from the same household
 - Respond to prescreening 24 hours before their visit
 - Agree to report any symptoms of COVID-19 that occur during three days after their visit
 - Provide their personal contact information to facilitate contact tracing which Mercy Circle will conduct if necessary
- Residents and their guests should schedule their visits by sending an email to LifeEnrichment@MercyCircle.org
- Activities for 10 or fewer residents have resumed in activities rooms set-up for social distancing on each floor

While these IDPH guidelines do not apply directly to independent living residents, we encourage independent living residents to continue planning outdoor visitations following the same procedure and schedule.

We encourage everyone to take walks through our beautiful grounds and sit on the benches at the main entrance or in the patio or Courtyard.

To enhance residents' daily routine, we encourage participating in what is broadcast on Channel 8

- Activities and programs which Mercy Circle provides
- Mass from Monday through Saturday

Follow protocols

Residents and staff continue to adhere to numerous protocols as we strive to mitigate the spread of the virus by following the directives of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and the Chicago and Illinois Departments of Public Health.

At this time, Mercy Circle is

- Striving to combat the effects of isolation for all residents
- Monitoring all residents who live in our healthcare settings for symptoms
- Screening all employees at the beginning of and during each shift
- Enforcing the City of Chicago's travel restrictions to "hot spots" that now require a 14-day quarantine upon return from certain States and Territories. The City posts this information every Tuesday and restrictions are effective on Fridays.
- Advocating that all residents only leave the campus for medically necessary appointments
 - Assisted living residents must call Janet Tucker at extension 3650
 - Skilled nursing care residents must call Anita Ajayi, RN, at extension 3664
- Encouraging families and friends to take advantage of compassionate visits with residents whose family member or dear friend has passed away or who is experiencing significant health challenges by contacting the staff members listed above
- Applying all prescreening practices for all healthcare professionals and other essential visitors who enter the building
- Restricting visitors, including volunteers and other non-essential healthcare professionals

As part of our effort to combat the spread of COVID-19, please remember to

- Put on a face mask covering your nose and mouth before leaving your residence and wearing that mask until you return home
- Practice six-foot social distancing in all situations

- Wash hands regularly using soap or sanitizer available at numerous stations
- Avoid all non-essential outings and social gatherings

Thank you for playing a role in our progress as Mercy Circle prepares to advance into the highest CMS Phase which affords opportunities for more ways and time to be together. Please call my office, 773-253-3627, so we can discuss your concerns, questions and suggestions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Frances Lachowicz". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Frances Lachowicz
Executive Director