



November 6, 2020

Dear Residents, Families and Staff Members,

Our Region 11 and the entire State of Illinois continues to experience day-over-day increases in the number of new COVID-19 cases. This afternoon, the Illinois Department of Public Health reported for the first time ever more than 10,000 new cases of the virus, citing a total of 10,376 as our State's daily case count.

Yesterday, the Chicago Department of Health reported a positivity rate of 13.5 percent for our zip code for the week ending October 31—a very big leap from 7.9 percent seven days earlier—and 9.3 percent for 60643—an increase from 7.4 percent reported on October 24.

With these facts in mind, we encourage all residents to remain on campus and to ask for assistance from Paul May in Transportation at 312-397-9041 and Marge Everett in Marketing at extension 3603 for shopping or ordering groceries or medications online.

### ***Closer to home***

As you know from yesterday's notice, two assisted living residents and one administrative team staff member now are self-quarantined in their homes and recovering from the virus. The other 57 residents living in our healthcare wings, who were tested on Monday, November 2, received negative results.

Due to these new occurrences, we again tested 57 assisted living and skilled nursing care residents on Thursday, November 5, and await those results. Nonetheless, Mercy Circle again will test all residents in our healthcare settings and all employees on Monday, November 9.

While we have temporarily suspended all indoor visitations, we encourage residents to plan virtual visits with family and friends. Our staff is eager to help everyone stay connected when you send a request to [LifeEnrichment@MercyCircle.org](mailto:LifeEnrichment@MercyCircle.org).

### **Assisted living residents**

Now that assisted living residents are quarantined in their apartments, they are

- Being monitored three times daily for symptoms
- Dining in their apartments where three daily meals are delivered to them
- Participating in activities and programs on Channel 8

## **All other residents**

While Mercy Circle remains in Tier 1 mitigation status due to the sustained spike in cases in our surrounding area, we still can host outdoor visits for independent, memory care and skilled nursing care residents.

We ask you, however, to consider the fact more than 80 percent of people, who test positive for the virus, are asymptomatic. This means even with all the precautions we and our visitors take, there may be an increased likelihood of exposing a resident or employee to the virus. To still plan a visit, contact [LifeEnrichment@MercyCircle.org](mailto:LifeEnrichment@MercyCircle.org).

In addition, all of these residents can enjoy communal dining and small group activities, which are designed for safety and social distancing, and participate in our prayer and Communion service.

## ***Vigilance is essential***

Thank you for following our precautions to abate the virus' spread that include wearing a face mask that covers your nose and mouth; practicing six-foot social distancing in all situations; washing your hands regularly with soap or sanitizer at numerous stations; and avoiding all non-essential outings and social gatherings.

Please be confident that Mercy Circle

- Strives to combat the effects of isolation for all residents
- Monitors all residents who live in our healthcare settings for symptoms
- Screens all employees at the beginning of and during each shift
- Enforces the City of Chicago's travel restrictions to "hot spots" that now require a 14-day quarantine upon return from certain States and Territories
- Advocates that all residents only leave the campus when medically necessary
  - Assisted living residents must call Janet Tucker at extension 3650
  - Skilled nursing care residents call Anita Ajayi, RN, at extension 3664
- Applies all prescreening practices for all healthcare professionals and other essential visitors who enter the building
- Restricts all indoor visits by residents' family and friends as well as volunteers and other non-essential healthcare professionals

## ***Register to receive emails beginning Thursday, November 12***

To receive via email all weekly letters, 12-hour notices and advisories, register at [Communications@MercyCircle.org](mailto:Communications@MercyCircle.org) and write "Add my name" in the subject line.

Please be careful and call me at 773-253-3627 with your questions and suggestions.

Sincerely,



Frances Lachowicz, Executive Director