



TO Residents, Families and Staff Members
FROM Frances Lachowicz *Frances Lachowicz*
DATE December 17, 2020
SUBJ One Assisted Living Resident, Three Staff Members Have Tested Positive for COVID-19

This week, Mercy Circle began a new protocol that uses a rapid testing system for detecting COVID-19 called BD Veritor Plus. Our goal is to identify more quickly positive outcomes for both residents and staff members. In accordance with guidelines from the Illinois and Chicago Departments of Public Health, we will continue to use our lab for PCR tests to confirm any positive outcomes reported by BD Veritor Plus.

Using rapid tests yesterday, we confirmed 20 skilled nursing care residents and 38 assisted living residents had negative outcomes. We also learned

- One assisted living resident, who is asymptomatic, tested positive for the virus and is now isolated in the person's apartment and being regularly monitored. Our staff wears all appropriate PPE when providing any care for this person. Please respect this person's privacy by observing all HIPAA guidelines.

Today, 55 of the 58 employees tested using BC Veritor Plus received negative results. Three staff members, who are asymptomatic and worked today at Mercy Circle, tested positive for the virus. They include a

- Member of the dining services team for independent living residents
- Nurse caring for skilled nursing care residents
- Member of the administrative team

Upon receiving their test results, all three employees immediately went home to recover from the virus. They only will return to Mercy Circle in accordance with CDC guidelines.

During every shift, we carefully monitor all assisted living and skilled nursing care residents for signs and symptoms and, of course, follow all precautions to abate the spread of the virus.

Please respect the privacy of both residents and staff members who are coping with COVID-19 as well as any other health challenge.



In Illinois, number of COVID-19 cases begins to rise

Today, the Illinois Department of Public Health announced 8,828 new and probable cases of COVID-19 across the State, an increase of more than 1,500 new cases reported on Wednesday.

For our immediate neighborhood, 60655, the positivity rate was 14.9 percent on Saturday, December 12, down from 17.7 percent seven days prior. On the other hand, the City of Chicago's most recent positivity rate of 12.1 percent recorded on Saturday, December 12, hovers close to the threshold for considering changes in Tier 3 mitigation once the rate is consistently below 12 percent.

Please exercise all precautions that protect yourself and others from COVID-19. They include wearing a mask that covers your nose and mouth; observing six-foot social distancing; practicing hand hygiene; and checking with our Director of Nursing about self-quarantining after visiting an area designated by the City of Chicago as a hot spot or leaving our campus.

And take advantage of the numerous ways to anticipate Christmas that are offered for residents throughout our community.

I welcome your questions and suggestions when you call me at 773-253-3627 so we can discuss your concerns.