



February 12, 2021

Dear Residents, Families and Staff Members,

Alleluia! Today, I have so much good news to report!


- This week, all 58 residents in our healthcare settings and all 100 staff members, now only required to be tested weekly, received negative results for COVID-19
- Governor JB Pritzker last week lifted Tier mitigation across Illinois and moved all 11 Regions to Phase 4 of Restore Illinois
- With our last new case of COVID-19 on February 1, Mercy Circle meets the requirements of the Illinois and Chicago Departments of Public Health so we can resume more ways to enjoy our community and social life starting on Monday, February 15, with
 - Communal dining for all residents
 - In-person activities for groups with as many as 10 residents
 - Indoor visitations for all residents starting on Wednesday, February 17
 - A beauty shop schedule for all residents starting on or close to February 19

Even with so many residents and employees now fully vaccinated, we still must practice all precautions to mitigate spreading COVID-19. Please continue to

- Monitor yourself for symptoms of the virus and request a rapid test if you may have been exposed to COVID-19
- Wear a face mask that covers both nose and mouth
- Practice six-foot social distancing in all situations, especially entering and exiting common areas now clearly marked to facilitate distancing
- Wash hands regularly using soap and water or sanitizer
- Conform with Chicago's travel advisories
- Contact our Director of Nursing Anita Ajayi, RN, at 773-253-3664 for guidance on self-quarantining even if only leaving our campus for a brief time

Indoor visitations for all residents

We have set-up 12 visiting areas in the Wisconsin Room so residents, families and friends can meet comfortably and safely while adhering to precautions regarding the virus. We also expect everyone to follow the guidelines by CDC and CMS which are posted in the *Visitors Guidelines* section on our website.

To ensure we accommodate everyone safely, please make advance reservations, participate in screening for COVID-19 24-hours in advance, and follow all guidelines health agencies require. To schedule a visit, send an email to LifeEnrichment@MercyCircle.org. 

Our staff makes life easier

Our Life Enrichment team also will plan virtual visits for residents whose family and friends may live out-of-town or prefer them. Please send your requests to LifeEnrichment@MercyCircle.org.

When choosing Mercy Circle, most residents probably did not have “personal shopper” on their list! During the pandemic, they do. We are grateful to Paul May and Marge Everett for providing assistance with online ordering and picking up items for residents. Please contact Paul at 312-307-9043 and Marge at extension 3603.

Our spirited and spiritual lives

On February 16, we will celebrate Fat Tuesday by delivering traditional Pączkis to all residents in our healthcare settings. We ask independent living residents to pick-up their delicious doughnuts in the Bistro and for all residents to check their calendar for a Mardi Gras Happy Hour later in the day.

On February 17, we will begin our Lenten journey with a prayer service, and on all other Wednesdays in Lent there will be a spiritual presentation held in the Agatha O’Brien Room for residents of each area. On Fridays, Avis Clendenen will lead “A Contemporary Stations of the Cross” followed by Communion in the Agatha O’Brien Room.

On Tuesdays at 11am and on Saturdays at 4pm, Mass will be offered in our Chapel and can be viewed on Channels 1 and 7. Initially, only independent living residents can attend these services, our first since March. All residents, however, will be offered Communion on both days.

As soon as Mercy Circle advances to Phase 3 and IDPH and CDPH grant us approval for gatherings to include more residents, we will invite assisted living and skilled nursing care residents to return to the Chapel. For now, please check your calendar for in-person prayer and Communion services held in the Agatha O’Brien Room.

It is wonderful to see residents enjoying each other’s company over meals, in exercise classes and other activities; visiting or watching TV in living rooms; taking walks in Mercy Hall; and reading in the library. We appreciate your careful attention to staying safe.

Contact me whenever you have questions and suggestions. Call 773-253-3627.

I look forward to more and more seeing you in our hallways and common areas.

Sincerely,



Frances Lachowicz
Executive Director