

December 24, 2020

Dear Residents, Families and Friends,

As you know from previous letters, the D.C. Health Nurse Strike team continues to come to our Home every Monday afternoon for the weekly testing of the staff and Sisters for COVID-19. We'd like to give you an update of the results over the past weeks.

The results of December 7 revealed all staff were negative except one who worked in the dishwashing room. The test results the following week revealed two more employees tested positive. These employees are currently in quarantine. Since a group of Residents from the second floor were in proximate contact with one of the infected employees, it was recommended that they be quarantined for 14 days as well. All the Residents on this unit are being closely monitored for any signs and symptoms of the virus. Fortunately, they remain asymptomatic.

The unfortunate news is that this past Monday's test results revealed everyone was negative, except for three employees who tested positive. These employees are currently in quarantine.

In reviewing these test reports with the DC Health Epidemiology team, their guidance includes the following from the Phase I level of restrictions:

- All outdoor and window visits are temporarily suspended until further notice. Window visits are permitted **only** from the Resident's room and can be arranged with the Little Sister on each unit.
- The facility has completed the internal contact tracing to discover who may have been exposed.
- The Residents in the affected area will be tested. Two consecutive testings will be obtained. The second testing will be done along with the weekly all employee testing.
- Communal dining and communal activities are suspended for the time being. Tray service will be provided as we had done previously.
- All Residents on both nursing units and the second floor will need to be quarantined for 14 days.
- As we have been doing all along, we will continue to monitor the Residents for signs and symptoms (i.e. check O<sub>2</sub> saturation levels and temperatures every 4 hours).
- We will also continue with our staff screening while monitoring their temperatures at the beginning, middle, and end of their shifts.
- All precautionary measures already in place will be continued along with any additional guidance of the CMS-CDC and DC Health (the wearing of face masks, wearing of face shield on Resident care units, social distancing, handwashing and the frequent use of hand sanitizer).

We are well aware of the level of anxiety this situation may cause, not only for our Residents and staff, but for you as well. We would encourage you to call your loved one directly or telephone the nurse on the unit for assistance. To utilize the other means of communication that have been in place (i.e. Zoom or FaceTime), please make arrangements with Maggie Drew at [sswashington@littlesistersofthepoor.org](mailto:sswashington@littlesistersofthepoor.org) or the Little Sister on the unit for the rest of the month of December. If there are any further questions, feel free to contact Daisy Alzate, RN or Sr. Alphonse Marie.

We have seen reports from across the country that the coronavirus is still very prevalent and relentless. It makes no discrimination on who it “visits” and we are so grateful to our dedicated staff and all they are doing to help keep our Residents safe. We have a contract with Walgreens who is making arrangements to administer the COVID vaccine to our staff and Residents when it becomes available to our facility. We are initiating the distribution of the consent forms with regards to this endeavor.

In closing, we want to share the news that we recently received a new Sister in our community. Sister Mary Jeanette will now be the supervisor of Good Shepherd Unit. In exchange for this joyful addition, we bid farewell to Sr. Christina who has only been here a few months but has rendered a tremendous amount of service during the early phases of the pandemic. Sr. Christina has returned to our Home in Delaware where she will continue to minister to the Residents there.

We appreciate your understanding at this time, and we are so grateful to the kindness and generosity of all those inspired to support us throughout these past months. As we remember those who have been affected by the coronavirus, we want to assure you of our prayers during these difficult times and wish all of you many blessings throughout the New Year!

God bless you,

Sr. Mary Michael and all the Little Sisters