

May 8, 2020

Dear Family Member,

Greetings from Jeanne Jugan Residence. Today I come to you with both good news and a very worrisome concern.

First the good news: We are again happy to communicate that we remain without any newly confirmed cases of Covid-19 among the Residents. As we mentioned in our last letter, we have had only one confirmed case since the onset of the virus and this Resident has recovered.

Recently, we had one more confirmed case among our staff, but this individual will not return to work until asymptomatic for at least three days and 14 days after the onset of symptoms.

We Little Sisters and our dedicated staff continue to follow all Department of Health (DOH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance to protect the Residents. These recommendations include strict infection control and prevention initiatives, stringent handwashing procedures, restricting visitation and screening all individuals – including staff – who enter our Home.

Now I must share with you some very worrisome news. On April 29th new directives on Covid-19 were issued by the New York State Department of Health. One concern is “cohorting of residents” in nursing homes.” Nursing home residents must now be separated into Covid-positive, negative and unknown groups, with dedicated (separate) staff for the positive and non-positive residents. The guidelines also instruct nursing homes to transfer residents within a facility, or to transfer them to another facility or to a non-certified location if they are unable to geographically separate the positive from the non-positive residents within the nursing home.

The April 29 directives further note that facilities unable to meet these standards must suspend admissions and that failure to adhere to these requirements will result in civil monetary penalties and/or a license revocation. In a related call on April 30th DOH staff noted that nursing homes should accept and retain only residents whom they are able to care for in accordance with their regulations.

Therefore, in order to comply with these directives **Jeanne Jugan Residence must provide dedicated staff and an area separated from the rest of the house for any Resident who tests positive or shows Covid-19 positive symptoms.** Due to the already strained situation in providing adequate staff to care for our Residents, **if any Residents test positive for Covid-19 we will be forced to transfer them to another facility or to make arrangements with you to take them home.**

We know that for many of you, taking your loved one home would not be an option, and seeing them transferred to another facility would not be your wish in these difficult days. Nor do we want to see this happen! Your loved one is also like family to us Little Sisters and to everyone here at our Jeanne Jugan Residence family.

We hope and pray that we will be able to go on caring for all of the Residents right here, and we ask you to join us in praying for this as well. We will continue doing our utmost to train our staff, to stringently follow all infection control practices and to keep all the Residents safe, healthy and happy, no matter how long the pandemic continues.

On a lighter note our ingenious activity department delighted the Residents with a Cinco de Mayo celebration while respecting social distancing. A generous benefactor donated Margueritas to add to the party. A Mother's Day dress up photo op will take place today and tomorrow in-house staff will help curl the Residents hair for Mother's Day. Hopefully these efforts will continue to help the Residents through these trying times.

Sincerely,

Sr. Gertrude Mary lsp

P.S. In case you are interested in reading the actual wording of the new regulations I am including them here.

The [work exclusion guidance](#) requires nursing homes to exclude from work employees who test positive for COVID-19, but are asymptomatic, for 14 days from the "first positive test date." The guidance also requires exclusion from work of symptomatic employees until 14 days after symptom onset, provided that three days (72 hours) elapse since the resolution of fever without fever-reducing medications and respiratory symptoms are improving. The guidance acknowledges that these restrictions exceed the 10-day exclusion period set forth in the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's \(CDC\) symptom-based and time-based return to work strategies](#). The DOH guidance does not reference the CDC's test-based strategy for determining eligibility for returning to work. According to DOH staff, the State's extended exclusion period applies only to nursing home staff and not other health care facility or home care agency staff.

The [second of the two DOH letters](#) to nursing home administrators includes a series of reminders of existing infection control requirements and adds a requirement to cohort residents into COVID-19-positive, negative, and unknown groups, with dedicated staff for the positive and "non-positive" residents. The letter instructs nursing homes to transfer residents within a facility, to another facility, or to a non-certified location if they are unable to successfully "separate out residents." The letter further notes that facilities that are unable to meet infection control standards must suspend admissions. According to the letter, a failure to adhere to these requirements will result in civil monetary penalties and/or a license revocation.

In a related call on April 30th, DOH staff noted that nursing homes should accept and retain only residents whom they are able to care for in accordance with regulations.