

LEXINGTON HAPPENINGS



SPECIAL BULLETIN: COVID-19 UPDATES

FRIDAY, MAY 8

MESSAGE FROM SHALONI



Dear Lexington staff members,

I hope each of you is doing well, as are your families. Here is my weekly update to you regarding our war with the virus:

The Facts:

I'm not including our data chart in this issue as there has not been much change in our data. This has been a good week at Lexington. **All of our homes are out of Isolation!** Thank you to the incredible teams and all others from across the agency who helped these teams.

- One of our homes in the Town of Perth was placed on Isolation on Saturday, May 2nd, as a staff member told us that she had tested positive for COVID-19. She was feeling ill and had been out of work since 4/23. Our Response Team and administrative staff immediately responded to the house and were able to get the home ready and staff trained. The six people supported and 15 staff were tested and results were negative for all. So, this home was taken off isolation on Wednesday, May 6.
- We have a few other people who are on droplet precautions and are awaiting test results. This is because we are being extra careful in isolating and testing anyone who is ill or may have returned from the hospital.

Our strategy in fighting this war with COVID-19:

This week, in our strategy in fighting this war with COVID-19, I want to speak to you about **Our Community and How it Affects Us**.

The epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak in the U.S. is in New York, and is particularly concentrated in the New York City region. As of this writing, there have been 327,469 cases in New York State. But the number of new cases in the state has reached a plateau, at least for now, and Governor Cuomo has talked about re-opening areas upstate after May 15.

The plateau is, however, seen mostly in the NYC region. Albany County has seen a spike in cases both in nursing homes as well as in the community. Albany County has become a new epicenter for this virus with 1,348 confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Fulton County has also seen a tremendous spike with COVID-19 cases in the past few days, primarily because of positive cases of people who live at the Fulton Center, the former Fulton County Infirmity. Because of the effect this will have on our small community, we have added appropriate screening questions to our Visitors/Employee Logs about who may know/live with someone who works there. While our hearts go out to the people who work and live at the Fulton Center, this new spike in cases reminds us that we have to continue to be vigilant about our preventative measures, now more than ever. We currently have 7 staff who have been tested due to contact with the Fulton Center. As of this writing, Fulton County has 101 confirmed cases of COVID-19.

It is more important than ever to bring the preventative measures that we practice at Lexington to your lives outside of work in our community. Practicing these measures in your homes and in the public are just as important as putting these preventative measures into place at work.

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our community, please try to:

- STAY HOME as much as you can.
- PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING – at least 6 feet between you and other people
- WASH HANDS often
- COVER your cough and sneezes with a tissue, throw tissue in trash
- CLEAN AND DISINFECT touched objects and surfaces daily
- WEAR A CLOTH COVERING OVER YOUR NOSE AND MOUTH when in public when you come into contact with other people – please note that this is an Executive Order for all New Yorkers issued by Governor Cuomo starting on April 17. We have handmade cloth coverings for every employee if anyone needs one.

Unification with Schoharie Arc:

On a different note, I am excited to inform you that the Boards of Directors of Lexington and Schoharie Arc have decided to unify as one organization. A request will be made to our parent organization, The Arc NY, and our state oversight entity, OPWDD, to allow unification of our two organizations. The target date for this unification is set at October 1, 2020 but may be delayed due to the current pandemic. The combined organization will continue to be called Lexington, The Arc NY. Administrative teams from both agencies are working together to determine how best to integrate each of the areas of our agencies. As we progress in our efforts, I will keep you informed. Please welcome Schoharie Arc, the people it supports and employees to our family, and show them the warmth that is Lexington.

Thank you for your support to everyone we are responsible for at Lexington and to each other. Please take care of yourselves, your family and the Lexington family.

With gratitude,

Shaloni

NEWS FROM LEXINGTON'S MEDICAL DIRECTOR, DR. KEVIN COPE

Dear Lexington employees,

Data on COVID-19 has become something that many of us in healthcare look at every day to keep a keen eye on the spread and transmission rates, which tell us how to proceed with our preventative measures to avoid the spread, both in our communities and at Lexington. I'm sure that many of you might also be following the mounds of data that is now available to the public.

The NYS Department of Health tracks data through our public health departments each day and reports it online in a NYSDOH COVID-19 Tracker. The data, thankfully, shows that the epicenter of this virus, New York City, Long Island, Westchester County and other downstate regions, is currently experiencing data on cases that has flattened or is on the down slope of the curve.

Unfortunately, that is not the case in our areas of service. In Fulton County as of May 4, there were 986 people tested, with 97 testing positive – an almost 10% rate. Thirteen people were added to these positive cases on May 5 alone. In Albany County, as of the same day, 12,084 people were tested, with 1294 testing positive – an over 10% positive result number. Like many nursing homes around the country, there has been an outbreak at the Fulton Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing in Gloversville, which has the potential to spread to our relatively small community through staff contact. The coronavirus is still among us, and we are clearly not out of the woods yet. Although the conversation has begun on the state level about reopening with New York Forward initiatives, these measures won't help us if this number of positive cases continues to grow in our areas.

Lexington has modeled for you some sound preventative measures to help keep the people we support safe, as well as to keep you and your families safe. I can't impress on you how important it is to keep these measures at the forefront of your work selves as well as your home selves. We must continue to proceed with caution to keep everyone healthy.

Thank you for your continued work on behalf of the people we support.

#RISINGTOGETHER AT LEXINGTON!



All over Lexington, people continue to stay productive, help each other out and find new ways of having fun and staying connected as we move into another week of lockdown and a new spring month! Here are a few stories of what people are up to:

- Theresa Stewart and Evelyn Morales are enjoying delivering meals to the Mountain Views. Evelyn said she likes helping and giving back! Thanks to Theresa and Evelyn for making sure these houses have everything they need!
- Family bonds are always a priority at Lexington, and they are more important than ever during this pandemic. This weekend, Mary Kaye Ormiston helped people at two houses make decorated picture frames and shadow boxes for Mother's Day presents! Thank you, Mary Kaye, for helping everyone show their mothers how much they care even if they can't be with them!
- Last week, 34 Northeast, Progress Road, 62 Chestnut, 175 South Main, 69 Chestnut, 231 South Kingsboro and Phelps Street all held a Spirit Week! Sunday was Sunglasses Day, Monday Wacky Sock Day, Tuesday Tie Dye Day, Wednesday Pajamas Day, Thursday Wacky Hair Day, Friday Hat Day and Saturday Party Day. Thanks to everyone who participated in this friendly competition to boost spirits and encourage fun and creativity during these unusual times!
- Last week, members of Lexington's leadership team delivered care packages to each employee as thanks for everything they have done during this very challenging time. Please know that your "work family" appreciates you and hopes you and your family stay safe and healthy! Pictured are Jim Yanno, Shaloni Winston and Dan Richardson dropping off packages at Feura Bush.
- The men who live at Northampton planted a quarantine garden! With the help of their amazing staff, they are growing peas, carrots, green beans, potatoes and more. The men water the plants daily and helped sew garden bags out of recycled feed bags to plant the potatoes in. They are all proud of their work and looking forward to someday eating the fruits of their labor!
- 34 Northeast, 231 South Kingsboro and other houses had fun celebrating Cinco de Mayo on Tuesday with costumes, props, decorations, piñatas, Mexican food and more!
- The staff at 15 Lex got creative by holding a camp-themed lunch! They worked hard to make camp decorations, including a "fire" and tent, and camp games and activities such as "fishing," then rounded it out with some delicious grilled burgers and hot dogs. Thank you to the staff for constantly using their imaginations to make the most of every situation!
- Ned's brother Jeff used to visit him every weekend. Unfortunately, like everyone else, he hasn't been able to see Jeff since social distancing began in March. This week, staff helped him FaceTime with Jeff for the first time! Ned was so happy to see his brother.

PAUL NIGRA CENTER FOR CREATIVE ARTS UPDATE

- The Paul Nigra Center for Creative Arts is offering a variety of free, interactive virtual arts classes and other social activities through Zoom! To see the full May calendar of classes and events, which include bingo, sign language, cooking, painting, photography, jewelry making, gardening, yoga, meditation, fitness, dance and more, please visit thearclexington.org/s/May-2020-Nigra-Arts-Center-Virtual-Arts-Calendar.pdf. All are welcome to participate! Pre-registration is required. To sign up, please email Hailey Lozier at lozierh@thearclexington.org or call the Nigra Arts Center at (518) 661-9932. We hope to see you there!
- Didn't get the chance to come in and see our Women's Movement: Art By, About and For Women exhibition before we went into lockdown? **Then make sure to check out the Virtual Tour of this art show on the Nigra Arts Center Facebook page!**
- The 2020 Fashion Show has been canceled. The 2020 Lexington Golf Tournament has been rescheduled to Thursday, August 27.
- The bus trips to Boston (scheduled for May 16), the Bronx Zoo (scheduled for June 14) and Legoland (scheduled for August 12) are canceled. For questions about the bus trips, please contact Lynette May at mayl@thearclexington.org.



DONATIONS OF PPE FOR EMPLOYEES

We are incredibly grateful to every business and individual who has provided us with homemade cloth masks, surgical masks, gowns, face shields and other items that are critical to helping us keep our employees and the people we support as safe and healthy as possible. Some recent donations include:

- Gloversville Sewing Center—20+ gowns
- MVP Health Care—600 masks
- RIST 3D Printing—100 face shields
- Emily Bornt—50 masks
- Kathy Duffendack—20 masks
- Sandy McClelland—30 masks

RESOURCES AND COMMUNICATIONS

Resources highlighted in previous weeks can be found at thearclexington.org/wellness or thearclexington.org/family-connections.

- **United Concierge Medicine: The Virtual ER**—Lexington's Telemedicine provider (1-844-484-7362).
- **Brook App**—This health and wellness app is free to download through at least June 30! Brook offers 24/7 health support from health specialists and answers to COVID-19 questions, all easily accessible from the comfort of your home.