



INFORMATION FOR LEXINGTON LEADERS

November 13, 2020

LET'S RENEW FOCUS ON COVID PRECUATIONS AS THE VIRUS HAS AFFECTED OUR FAMILY AGAIN. WE NEED TO STOP THE SPREAD.

At Lexington -

- We currently have a home in Fulton County with several cases of COVID-19 that has been developing over the past 2 weeks. The home has been using droplet precautions.
- After we received the positive result we tested everyone in the home and all employees who may have been exposed. Over the past 10 days we have completed 2 rounds of testing and have a total of 3 people we support and 5 employees positive. Though we suspect this is most likely all directly related to the initial exposure it is very concerning as 5 of these people tested negative on the first test.
- This reiterates that the incubation period of 2 to 14 days is different for everyone so we must remain diligent up to 14 days after exposure.

- Several people in this group have been symptomatic with one person we support in the hospital for a week for treatment of COVID-19-related pneumonia. He is now home and doing well due to the aggressive treatment he received and wonderful support from our incredible staff.
- Staffing has been challenging at this home. We are very grateful to all those who have volunteered to work here, even from as far as Albany.

With the increase in COVID-19 in Lexington and areas surrounding us, we need each of you to refocus on staff being 100% with respect to using our COVID precautions. That includes:

- 1) Wearing our masks at all times when at work and when out in the community. Wearing a mask properly includes over both your nose and mouth. We can spread and receive the COVID-19 virus thru both our nose and mouth. As our homes are very comfortable, we tend to think we are safe from COVID-19, but it only takes one person to bring it into the home and the effects can be devastating.
- 2) Encouraging everyone we support to wear a mask when within 6 feet of someone else.
- 3) Please continually monitor and remind staff. Masks and disinfection procedures have become our biggest tools to prevent the spread of the virus.
- 4) Please ensure staff are reporting any symptoms of illness during our screening before starting work. Many people are mistaking symptoms of upper respiratory infection as just allergy symptoms later finding out they are COVID-19 positive. People with any symptoms of illness should not go in to work and should immediately call UCM or their own MD for guidance and direction.
- 5) Please remind staff that if they believe that they may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 please ask them to contact you immediately so you can contact nursing for guidance.
- 6) We also need to remember frequent hand washing is a must as well as disinfecting surfaces several times a day. Please schedule these efforts as part of your routine.

In the Community:

- Albany County - Albany County Executive Dan McCoy announced Saturday that the number of new confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 in the county increased to 147 since Friday. This is the highest record for single-day positive cases since the outbreak began.
 - Fulton County - an increase of 20 between November 8 - November 15
 - Schoharie County - an increase of 22 since November 4 - with total cases at 133
- As you can see, numbers are already starting to spike in all three counties.

- The *New York Times* published a story in its November 10 issue outlining the elevated risk that COVID-19 poses for people with I/DD and emphasizing the importance of including this high-risk population in plans for vaccine prioritization. The story references data that shows how **people with I/DD are THREE TIMES more likely to die of Covid-19, compared with patients without the conditions.** The message that this article sends is obvious - the importance of our preventative measures cannot be understated with the data presented here. The article can be found here: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/10/health/covid-developmental-disabilities.html>

PROCEDURES FOR MANAGERS IF AN EMPLOYEE IS SICK - IN ANY DEPARTMENT OR PROGRAM

Please be reminded of the following procedures for an employee who is sick:

- Staff who are sick should not be coming to work - with ANY symptoms of illness
- When staff calls out, managers should remind staff that they need to contact UCM or their physician immediately for guidance
- Supervisor should collect details about employee's illness and then EMAIL or TEXT information about staff member to Kathy Kane
- Managers should remind staff that they should not return to work without medical clearance
- Questions? Please contact Nursing Department

FAMILY VISITS ON HOLD

Last Friday, we contacted family members who had planned visits with their loved ones both at Lexington residences and off of Lexington properties. We took these steps to keep everyone we support and all of our employees safe and healthy in light of the following three factors:

1. We are currently dealing with several positive tests within one of our residences
2. We are seeing increasing rates of positive COVID-19 tests in Fulton, Schoharie and Albany Counties
3. We've recently learned of spikes in several local schools

We have set up private spaces in several day program buildings that allow us to safely support family visits while minimizing any possible exposure to others. Family members are asked to contact their Residence Managers to make appointments to use these spaces.

We will be taking the next few days to more closely assess each situation and to determine how we can continue to partner with families so we can support everyone's' desire to spend time together while also ensuring each person's health and safety. To that end, we plan to contact families again later this week to let them know of our plans for visits into the holidays.

COVID SAFETY PRECAUTIONS AND TIPS FOR TRAVEL FOR STAFF MEMBERS

If Lexington staff members are planning to travel this holiday season, prior to leaving on your trip, please ensure that they check the most recent travel restrictions and consider how it may impact them, their family and your co-workers. [A New Travel Advisory and Guidance will be sent via email later this week. Please watch for this important information.](#)

Attached is a document, ***COVID Safety Precautions and Tips for Traveling During the COVID-19 Pandemic***. We would like you to discuss this document with your staff members, and the protocols for traveling that are currently in effect. It includes the current travel advisories for international travel, travel within the United States, and in and out of New York State.

HELPFUL TIPS FOR SAFELY ENJOYING THE HOLIDAYS

We have put together a document to share with staff on some tips for enjoying the holidays safely, including tips and information about pre-planning, people, preparing your environment, and ways to show your loved ones you care. There are also links for more information. Please share this with your staff and support them to enjoy the holidays in the safest ways possible during this pandemic.

Access the document here: [Tips to Safely Enjoy the Holidays](#)

Dear Lexington Leaders,

Thank you for the ongoing support you are showing your staff regarding the new staffing models, and for helping them to understand the importance of how it will allow us flexibility in delivering services and programs, and cost-savings in the face of mounting financial challenges. Thank you for helping everyone through this transition period of merger as we truly become one agency supporting people in three counties.

You lead your staff to provide exemplary supports to individuals in myriad ways - helping people with the voting process last week (see photos above), keeping people engaged and enjoying all kinds

of activities. Your tenacity and unwavering support of your staff and individuals is helping us continue to do amazing things at Lexington despite the adverse circumstances we are in.

The second wave of COVID is here in the same manner as the first wave - affecting multiple people in one home. We need your help in stopping the spread this time just like you did before. It's been a while since our previous case so we may have gotten relaxed in our practices. Please...please... please do what do you best - inspire your staff to rise to the challenge of keeping COVID out of Lexington.

Thank you for your support and leadership - we are so grateful!

Shaloni & Dan

This newsletter will be archived at the following link:
<https://thearclexington.org/lex-leaders-covid-updates>
