

## COVID-19 Update

March 23, 2020

Good afternoon.

The items below represent the latest topics and information from our COVID-19 Task Force meetings:

**Status** – At this time, there are **no confirmed or suspected cases** at our communities. Despite the fact we presently have no confirmed or suspected cases, government officials are warning that the number of confirmed cases in the United States will greatly and rapidly increase during the next one to two weeks as larger numbers of people are tested. The projected numbers of individuals likely to be infected with the COVID-19 virus during this time suggest we can expect one or more of our communities to experience confirmed cases among our residents and/or staff members, and we are preparing for such an eventuality. If at any point we do become aware of a possible case, we will follow the recommendations and directives of the CDC and ISDH and do our best to keep you informed.

**Stay at Home Order** – Today, Governor Eric Holcomb issued a “stay at home” order for the state. The order will be effective from Wednesday, March 25, through April 7. The Governor’s executive order demands that citizens remain in their homes except when working for essential businesses or for “permitted activities, such as taking care others, obtaining necessary supplies, and for health and safety.” All residents should refrain from leaving their community at this time. Any trip away exposes you and potentially all of your friends to the COVID-19 virus. Services for delivery of items to your home or unit should be available, and your Executive Director can provide instructions for access.

**ISDH and Voluntary Leaves of Absence** – In recognition that repeated trips in and out of congregate settings endangers all residents, the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) is strongly discouraging Voluntary Leaves of Absence (this does not include hospital stays) and allowing providers to discharge residents who leave against medical advice. While not desirable, BHI will follow this guidance and add such measures to our policies in an effort to protect residents and limit exposure.

**Staffing Levels** – Currently, our communities are not experiencing issues or concerns with staffing. Our staff members are fully aware of the current challenges and are prepared to respond as necessary for your health and safety. Certainly, with the highly contagious nature of this virus, we are planning for some absences due to illness and/or quarantine and are hiring additional staff to fill any gaps that might appear in our schedules.

**Supplies (PPE)** – We continue to look for additional supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as gloves, masks, gowns, etc. from non-traditional sources. In addition, we are tapping into volunteer groups in our local areas who are making homemade masks to supplement our inventories. The Executive Directors at each community are making their own efforts to establish internal groups of volunteers for making masks and supplementing our supplies. Please let a staff member at your community know if you are interested in participating.

We thank you for your interest in staying informed. We will provide another update soon.

Thank you.

John Dattilo