



## COVID-19 Update

December 18, 2020

We have a holiday request: if you have made any plans to travel or to visit friends or family for Christmas or New Years, please follow California's safer-at-home orders and cancel them. And if you've already made plans to stay home, thank you! Doing everything you can to stay safe and to keep from spreading COVID-19 is the best gift you can give EVERYONE this year.

To help us process the grief of what we have lost in 2020, the chaplains from both Front Porch and Covia are collaborating on a Memorial for a Lost Year, taking place next Monday, December 21<sup>st</sup> at 1:30 pm. Residents and staff are all welcome. The attached flyer has details on how to join by Zoom.

Our communities are doing valiant work to contain COVID-19. Some have managed to decrease the number of cases, while others have increased slightly. Due to the number of cases statewide, it now often takes 5 to 7 days to get lab test results. With the positivity rate in Alameda and Monterey Counties now over 10%, our staff in Skilled Nursing there need to get tested twice a week.

Chris Ichien, VP of Life Plan Operations, has been working with our Executive Directors to create a special Covia COVID Unit. This unit will provide care for residents who test positive for COVID-19 and need skilled nursing care, as well as address staffing pressures experienced by our individual communities. We anticipate opening the unit on January 19<sup>th</sup>. More details are coming soon.

We are more hopeful about the year to come as the Pfizer vaccine begins to be distributed, with the Moderna vaccine likely not far behind. Some of our communities have been contacted by their pharmacy partners, though we have not yet gotten a date for any vaccine clinics in our communities yet.

Dr. Timothy Gieseke, who served as the Medical Director at Spring Lake Village for over 30 years, provided his insights on the vaccine in our recent blog post. He says, "I think it's effective and safe and it's something that when your turn comes I would be, 'I'm gonna be the first in line,' quite frankly." You can read the full blog post at <https://covia.org/blog/dr-timothy-gieseke-provides-perspective-on-covid-19-vaccines/> or watch the 30 minute interview he gave with Laura Darling, VP of Communications, on our YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/AslzrmPtbs>.

As the post says, "Although the vaccine is good news, for right now his guidance is, 'mask as much as you can. That's kind of where you live at this point in time.' But, Dr. Gieseke assures us, 'this too will pass.'" Hold onto that hope!