



COVID-19 Update

December 11, 2020

We have some good news and some bad news.

The bad news is that the surge in COVID-19 cases has hit our communities. As of this writing, 14 residents and 2 team members at Webster House Health Center are positive. Canterbury Woods has 6 residents and 2 team members, San Francisco Towers has 3 team members, Lytton Gardens has 2 team members, Spring Lake Village has 1 resident and 2 team members, St. Paul's Towers has 1 team member, Webster House (IL) has 1 team member, and Friends House has 1 resident who are positive for COVID-19. With cases still emerging from the Thanksgiving holiday, we expect those number to increase, though we are doing everything we can to keep them contained.

We need your help. We know you're tired of hearing it and you're tired of feeling trapped at home. We would like nothing better than to give everyone a much needed break. But in order to contain this virus, we need everyone to do what is in your power to do.

One piece of good news is that there is a lot that is in your power. It may not feel like much, but taking precautions of staying at home as much as possible, wearing a mask or face covering *properly* any time you leave your home (even if you're just going down the hall of your building), not gathering in person with anyone outside your household (or maintaining *at least* 6 feet of distance from others *while masked* if you do) – all of these things are under your control.

Additionally, in consultation with the COVID-19 Task Force, the Human Resources department has updated our travel policies and practices for team members, based on the latest CDC Travel Advisory and California's Stay at Home orders. All Covia team members will need to review and sign this document as part of our overall precautions for everyone's health and safety.

On Tuesday, Kevin Gerber, Covia's president and CEO, talked with the Expanded Leadership team about how this is a marathon, not a sprint. An avid runner himself, Kevin said it feels like we're at about mile 18, which sounds about right to us. There's still a long way to go. We know you didn't sign up for this marathon, most of us never

trained for it, and a lot of us don't even like running, and yet we have made it this far. Let us continue to run the race.

One thing that may help us reach the finish line is the COVID-19 vaccine. Yesterday, the FDA's vaccine advisory panel recommended that the agency grant an emergency use authorization to the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. LeadingAge posted an interview with Ruth Link Gelles, Doctoral Epidemiologist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, who shared, "If the process moves forward as anticipated, the FDA will meet Thursday; the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) will meet Friday; the FDA will issue the EUA on Saturday and ACIP would vote Sunday or Monday. Vaccinations would then begin the week of December 14th. The Moderna vaccine is scheduled for review beginning December 17. The Pharmacy Partnership could be activated beginning December 21, depending on what each state prioritizes." You can read the full interview here: <https://leadingage.org/regulation/whats-latest-vaccine-interview-cdcs-ruth-link-gelles>

All of Covia's communities have signed up to be part of the Pharmacy Partnership and are working with either CVS or Walgreens to have them hold immunization clinics as soon as they have a vaccine to administer. Our understanding is that the priority for vaccination will be our Skilled Nursing, Memory Care and Assisted Living residents along with our staff. But all of this depends on what California and the local health departments determine regarding who will receive the vaccine and how they direct CVS and Walgreens for this first round. We will provide more information as soon as it is available.

We know people have concerns about the approval process and the vaccine's safety. The best resource we've found comes from the Society for Post-Acute and Long Term Care Medicine, which we have posted on our website here: <https://covia.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/QA-about-the-COVID-19-Vaccine-AMDA.pdf>. It answers questions such as:

1. How is a vaccine developed and tested?
2. What are the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requirements for the safety and efficacy of a COVID-19 vaccine?
3. How will we know it is safe?

This has been a very long update, but we wanted to end with another piece of good news. Yesterday, it was announced that Covia is one of the Best Workplaces in Aging Services, as rated by Great Place to Work and Fortune magazine! After compiling the feedback from 94% of our team members, Covia ranked #17, our highest rating ever. You can read more about this honor on our blog, along with news about the recognition we've received from U.S. News and World Report and the Brandon Hall Group, at <https://covia.org/news/>. Thank you to everyone who makes Covia a Great Place to Work.

Last but not least, happy Chanukah! May we all be sustained to shine our light in the darkness.