



To our residents and families,

We understand that residents and families are concerned about COVID-19, the novel coronavirus, particularly since the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the virus a global pandemic. Welch Senior Living and the Allerton House have been responding to this outbreak with a coordinated preparedness plan. The health and safety of residents, their families, staff, and visitors are our highest priority. There are no cases of the virus at any Welch Senior Living community. Following are the actions we are taking to prevent infections:

Following CDC and WHO Guidelines

- We have a communicable disease policy in place, are following all protocols and advisories, as they are updated from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) and continue to implement any new precautionary steps to safeguard health as advised.
- A Welch Senior Living Task Force is coordinating these efforts. Managers throughout the community have specific, assigned responsibilities, should we ever suspect exposure to the virus.
- Our corporate senior Nurse Clinician is working with key staff within the Allerton Houses to make certain they are apprised of the latest developments, advisories, and protocols.
- Personal protective equipment to safeguard both residents and staff are in use when necessary.
- Staff have experience with flu and norovirus and are well trained in following "Universal Precautions," to minimize the impact of communicable disease.
- Stepped up infection control protocols have been initiated and include:
 - disinfecting common surfaces within the community such as doors, railings, tables, counter tops, phones, computers and their accessories, throughout the day. Additionally, our vans and cars are being disinfected daily.

We ask Residents that:

If you are not feeling well, stay in your apartment and immediately notify the Wellness Department and your personal physician.

Visitor Policy

Given recent developments, we strongly discourage visitation at this time. However, if you determine that a visit is essential, we are requesting that visitors, including vendors who visit the community enter through the main entrance, where everyone will be asked to answer a questionnaire and have their temperature taken and recorded. Visiting hours are now scheduled from 9 AM and 7:30 PM.

Hand sanitizing stations are placed throughout the community, as are signs on precautions to take, as advised by the CDC, when you visit. Please head directly to the resident's apartment and remain there for the duration of your visit. Visitors should not enter any other resident areas. For everyone's protection, common areas have restricted access.

If a family member or friend does not feel well or has flu-like symptoms, please have them refrain from an in-person visit for at least two weeks or until advised by their personal healthcare provider that a visit would be fine. We encourage families to take advantage of FaceTime and Skype to keep in touch when an in-person visit is not possible.

WE ASK THAT YOU NOT COME TO THE COMMUNITY IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING PERTAIN

- a. Have a fever and symptoms of respiratory illness, such as a cough or difficulty breathing.
- b. Have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19.
- c. Have symptoms and have traveled internationally within the past 2 weeks or have been around someone who traveled outside the country.

Call your physician if you answer yes to any of the above. Your PCP will work with MDPH and CDC to determine if you need to be tested for COVID-19.

If you answered no to all of the questions above you will be subject to further screening including having your temperature taken.

IF YOUR TEMPERATURE IS 100.3 DEGREES OR HIGHER YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO VISIT FOR THE NEXT 14 DAYS OR UNTIL CLEARED BY YOUR PHYSICIAN. IF YOU REFUSE TO HAVE YOUR TEMPERATURE TAKEN YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO VISIT.

What You Can Do

Currently, no vaccine is available to prevent infection with the new coronavirus, but there are steps we can all take to reduce risk of infection. The WHO and CDC recommend following the standard precautions for avoiding respiratory viruses:

- Wash your hands often for 20 seconds with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, when soap is not available.
- Cover your mouth and nose with your elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth if your hands aren't clean.
- Avoid close contact with anyone who is sick.
- Avoid sharing dishes, glasses, bedding and other household items if you're sick.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces you often touch.
- Stay home from work, school and public areas if you're sick.

The CDC does not recommend that healthy people wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19. **Only wear a mask if a health care provider tells you to do so.**

If anyone in our Community were to test presumptive positive for COVID-19, you would be notified immediately, along with the steps we are taking to safeguard your health and that of families and visitors.

If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to contact me or Ms. Stephanie Bowen, Resident Care Director.

Sincerely,

Thomas K. Karnes

Executive Director