

March 20, 2020

Dear AABR Families, Friends, and Staff:

We wanted to update and assure you that we are doing everything in our power to keep our individuals and staff safe as we move forward during this global pandemic.

We have had more than one person test positive for COVID-19. When an individual shows any signs or symptoms, they are immediately taken for testing. We are not waiting for results; we are then taking the rest of the residents and staff in the home for testing as well. We are checking temperatures twice daily and requiring staff to take their temperature prior to entering any residence. Staff and individuals are using masks to prevent spread, and we are constantly cleaning high touch surfaces.

We understand that just because someone isn't showing signs, doesn't mean they aren't infected. The moment we learned that the drive-through testing sites had opened, with approval from NYS DOH, we organized busses of staff and individuals to get testing. We are also working with NYS Department of Health on getting nurses to come to our facilities to provide on-site testing. We hope this will be operational soon. We wish we could tell you that every result has been negative; unfortunately, they weren't. Some individuals had to remain in hospitals while they recovered. The good news is that some individuals who did test positive are now ready to come home.

When an individual is ready to leave the hospital, we will keep them a safe distance from others. Individuals will be brought back to their residences so that they can remain in a place they know and feel comfortable, while also being with familiar staff who know their daily needs. They will be placed in an isolated living area away from all the other individuals. Staff will be supplied with all the necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) needed to care for individuals with COVID19, including gloves, goggles, masks, and gowns. We are following the medical protocols provided to us by the NYS DOH to care for our individuals and staff safely.

As you've undoubtedly read in the news, PPE supplies have become scarce in hospitals, nursing homes, and in all health care facilities. Currently, we have sufficient supplies. While we have enough, for now, many items like gloves and masks are for single-use only. So, supplies dwindle quickly. We're working with our government partners, as well as independently, to make sure we have enough of these pivotal items to last us for however long this may go on.

However, we cannot wait for the government to help. We have sought out our own supplier and have a shipment en route to arrive late next week from overseas. This has come at a great financial expense. An expense we did not hesitate for a minute to spend **because no price can be placed on our individual's or staff's safety**. We have set up a donation page to help us offset our increased COVID19 expenses. It can be found at www.aabr.org/covid19.

While this has certainly not been an easy time, I thank the kind-hearted, courageous, and hardworking staff who continue to show up for our individuals. Many are tired, some are scared, yet they continue to be on the front lines caring for our most vulnerable friends.

Sincerely,



Libby Traynor, LCSW
Executive Director