



March 25, 2020

Dear Community Partner:

With the evolving situation regarding COVID-19, Wartburg continues to closely follow recommendations made by the New York State Department of Health (DOH), as well as by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in an effort to safeguard the health of residents, patients, tenants, employees, families and visitors to the campus. We are provided frequent updates from State and Federal agencies and are following all guidelines recommended.

Effective March 21, the New York State DOH is **no longer recommending testing residents and healthcare workers for COVID-19** in nursing homes and adult care facilities where there is sustained community transmission. Because of the rise in the number of COVID-19 positive cases in the region, the DOH is declaring that any person with acute respiratory illness (severe cough or shortness of breath presenting with fever), in nursing homes and adult care/assisted living facilities in New York City, Long Island, Westchester County, or Rockland County, should be presumed to be COVID-19 positive and infection control measures are to be implemented.

#### VISITATION

As directed by New York State and following the recommendations of the CDC, we continue to safeguard our most vulnerable senior residents in our nursing homes and assisted living facilities by **not permitting visitors to our campus until further notice.**

#### ADDITIONAL SAFETY MEASURES IN PLACE

In addition to the **no-visitation policy** Wartburg implemented the following safety measures:

- All staff working in the Skilled Nursing Facility and Meadowview are wearing a facemask if they are within 6 feet of residents/patients, to further help protect any transmission from staff to resident/patient;
- Screening procedures for signs or symptoms of respiratory illness (including a cough, fever, and/or shortness of breath) are in place for all staff working in the Skilled Nursing Facility and Meadowview. Screening includes temperature checks upon arrival;
- We are following strict infection control and prevention guidelines; and
- We have increased the frequency of cleaning hard surfaces in residents' rooms and common areas (such as handrails, elevator buttons, door knobs and phones) with antiviral disinfectant.

#### COMMUNICATING WITH FAMILIES (Skilled Nursing and Meadowview)

Family communication remains a priority, and we are promoting phone calls & virtual visits for family members due to the restriction. If you would like to arrange a phone call or virtual visit with a patient/resident, please call your resident's Therapeutic Recreation leader, or you can

email [tr@wartburg.org](mailto:tr@wartburg.org) and a staff member will be in touch to coordinate the visit. As well, family members are contacted by staff for any changes in residents' condition, and can call the resident's/patient's social worker or nurse for updates on their loved ones. General messages will also be posted to the Wartburg website.

#### SOCIAL DISTANCING AND SELF-MONITORING

All of us are being asked to stay at home to the extent possible and only leave home for essential tasks. All of us should self-monitor for COVID-19 illness – especially those who have had close contact with a person with possible or confirmed COVID-19. **Close contact includes those persons who reside or provide care in the same household of the ill person or are an intimate partner of the ill person.** Close contacts should monitor their health, but should be particularly vigilant for 7 days starting from the last time there was close contact with the person while they were ill. Persons in whom COVID-19 like illness develops should isolate themselves at home. Persons who think they have possible or confirmed COVID-19 should isolate themselves in a private residence until 7 days following onset of illness and 72 hours after being consistently afebrile (without fever) without use of antipyretics and with resolving respiratory symptoms. Such ill persons should only seek healthcare if they have severe or worsening illness.

#### GENERAL FLU-PREVENTION MEASURES

We continue to encourage everyone to practice general flu-prevention measures as recommended by the CDC which are the exact same measures that will help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Stay home if you're feeling sick; call your doctor immediately to report your symptoms and travel history;
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or sleeve; throw the tissue away immediately;
- Wash your hands regularly;
- Avoid touching your face;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick; and
- Get your flu shot, if you haven't already received it.

As a reminder, Wartburg **closed all Adult Day Services and Outpatient Rehabilitative Services programs.** If you have questions about the closures please contact Administration at 914.513.5209.

Should you have any questions regarding Wartburg's response to preventing the spread of COVID-19, please contact the Compliance Help-Line at 844.673.8247, Wartburg's Nursing Home Administrative Team (Greg Poole-Day at 914.513.5209 or Bridget Zimmermann at 914.513.5488). Families may also contact the New York State Ombudsman program Westchester representative at 914.682.3926 or email [gtapiaramirez@wilc.org](mailto:gtapiaramirez@wilc.org).

We will continue to provide daily updates as necessary. Thank you for your continued support.

In Service Together,



David Gentner, Ed.D.  
President & CEO