

## Gurwin Jewish Nursing & Rehabilitation Center

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**Tuesday, September 8, 2020  
5:00 PM**

Dear Gurwin Residents and Family Members:

As you know, we are required by the NY State Department of Health (DOH) to inform you of the status of COVID-19 in our facility. This update is sent when there is information to report, such as a new positive case or a loss, and weekly as a cumulative report in order to provide transparency. Brief updates are provided to our residents on their televisions via Channel 31, should they choose to view it. Since last week, our cumulative numbers of COVID-19 recoveries and deaths have not changed: we have celebrated more than 150 recoveries and mourn the loss of 61 residents from COVID-19.

With visitation tied to nursing homes being 28 days COVID-19 free per the DOH - meaning no resident or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 for 28 days - many family members are reaching out, wanting reassurance about the protocols we have in place to keep our residents and staff safe, with the goal of meeting the visitation requirements. With those concerns in mind, we are providing the following information, which is in keeping with current guidance:

- Any time we have a newly confirmed, positive COVID-19 case among our residents, contact tracing is immediately initiated by our Infection Control Practitioner to identify any significant resident exposure. As required, discovered information is reviewed with the Department of Health for follow-up. To date, no connection has been made between an employee and resident who have tested positive for COVID-19.
- All employees and contract staff are screened at the entrance to the facility for COVID-19 symptoms, known exposure and travel history. This screening includes a thermal temperature. No employee with known symptoms of COVID-19 is permitted entry into the facility, and if symptoms develop during a shift, they are sent home.
- Employees are tested weekly, as per the DOH, for COVID-19. This testing is offered on-site via a nasal swab or can be completed in the community, and results are reported to our Human Resources department. Any employee testing positive is immediately removed from the schedule and required to quarantine for a minimum of 14 days. Employees are not returned to the schedule until they produce evidence of a negative clinical COVID-19 test. Since weekly testing began in May, 50 staff members have tested positive or presumed positive for COVID-19, most of whom have been asymptomatic; since the crisis began in March, 144 total staff have tested positive for the virus.
- Employees who have traveled to areas with a significant degree of community-wide spread, as identified by the Governor, are required to be tested within 24 hours of their return to New York. They are required to monitor themselves for symptoms and report daily to their supervisor for 14 days, in addition to daily screening and weekly COVID-19 testing.
- Staff who are in contact with residents are required to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), which includes, at minimum, surgical mask and eye protection, whenever they are within six feet of a resident. All employees, regardless of role, must wear a mask when entering the building and at all times while in the facility. We continue to have ample supplies of all necessary PPE.
- Employees are educated regarding the importance of social distancing in their personal lives as well as at work, including encouraging the wearing of face masks and performing proper hand hygiene. Infection control surveillance of our employees has shown proper PPE use; hand hygiene is continually monitored and reinforced through in-service education.
- Recently, in response to the identification of an employee testing newly

positive for COVID-19, NY State DOH requested a live video tour of the affected units and a review of our infection control measures. The feedback was positive, and there were no additional recommendations at that time.

As you know, any time there is a positive case of COVID-19 for either an employee or resident, our visitation date is pushed back 28 days, and all residents must be tested weekly until there is no positive result for at least 14 days. Unfortunately, a staff member's result was returned as "presumed positive" yesterday, which requires additional rounds of surveillance testing for our residents as well as a change in our target visitation date. Designated representatives will be notified of the test results for residents as soon as they are obtained. Our tentative date for visitation, as of today, is October 7, 2020, barring any new cases of COVID-19 and with approval from the DOH.

We continue to provide Drive-Up Visits for our families and residents who are not currently on a quarantined unit, as well as weekly video chat opportunities. Please be sure to [visit bit.ly/GurwinDriveUp](https://bit.ly/GurwinDriveUp) to make your Drive-Up Visit appointment for September (family members may sign up for two visits per month), and schedule your weekly video chat by emailing [videochat@gurwin.org](mailto:videochat@gurwin.org). You may also send your loved one a **Gurwin Gram Gram** - a short video - through Facebook Messenger or by emailing it to [info@gurwin.org](mailto:info@gurwin.org), and our staff will deliver it for you.

Finally, we know the pandemic has created hardship and anxiety for not only our residents and staff, but also our family members. For those who are having difficult coping with the changes in their lives, including being unable to visit with your loved one, we have learned about a support group that may be a good resource for you. An outpatient telehealth program is provided by CHE Behavioral Health Services free of charge, which can be accessed at [www.cheservices.com](http://www.cheservices.com), as well as a Zoom support group you may access by calling 516-457--5585.

Please be assured that you will be promptly notified if your loved one is identified as a suspected or positive case of COVID-19 or has any other significant change in condition. As always, we strictly adhere to HIPAA guidelines and cannot provide information on roommates or other specific residents.

These updates will be sent as necessary, and are located on our website at [www.gurwin.org/family-updates/](http://www.gurwin.org/family-updates/) should you need to access them .

Sincerely,  
The Gurwin Care Team

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**Video Chat** with your loved one: email [videochat@gurwin.org](mailto:videochat@gurwin.org) to request a time. (Limit one per family per week, please.)

Send your loved one a **Gurwin Gram Gram**. Send a short video to us via Facebook Messenger or by email to [info@gurwin.org](mailto:info@gurwin.org), and we'll deliver your good wishes.

Schedule a 10-minute Drive-Up Visit at the Gurwin Center. Visit [bit.ly/GurwinDriveUp](https://bit.ly/GurwinDriveUp) for details and to book your time slot.

Visit our [website at www.gurwin.org](http://www.gurwin.org) for Frequently Asked Questions and other updates on COVID-19.

### Gurwin Healthcare System

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