



December 11, 2020

Dear St. John's Meadows and Brickstone by St. John's Residents,

Well, we have been at this now for almost 45 weeks. Are we having fun yet? By now many of you may have questions regarding the COVID-19 vaccination and its distribution locally. The information contained here is compiled from general state and federal reports that I have been reviewing and is not specific regarding the confirmed process for all of the St. John's communities, including St. John's Home, as these respective details have not yet been identified. Here are some highlights.

New York State is expected to receive 170,000 doses of the Pfizer vaccine the week of December 15. These doses are planned to be distributed to skilled nursing home residents and health care workers in the first phase of the roll out. The Moderna vaccine is expected to be distributed next, with 346,000 doses planned to be delivered the week of December 21. Those who live and work in assisted living facilities are included within the early stages of the vaccination distribution process. However, it is unknown at this time specifically when the average, low risk, population will be eligible to receive the vaccination.

What if you have had the virus and are now testing negative, will you need to get the vaccine? The answer is yes, it is highly recommended. Most of the COVID-19 vaccines require two separate doses given about three or four weeks apart, depending on the vaccine.

Will St. John's staff members be offered opportunity to receive the vaccine? Yes they will. However, participation is free of charge, voluntary, and no resident or staff member can be mandated to receive the vaccine due to its emergency use authorization (EAU) classification. Therefore, receipt of the vaccine will not be made a condition of employment for employees.

Over the next several months, while the vaccinations are being distributed and due to the fact that those people who have received the vaccine can still be a carrier of the COVID-19

virus to others, continued use of all precautions such as mask wearing, social distancing will remain in effect for the foreseeable future. While the news of a vaccine is encouraging, unfortunately the NYSDOH and the CDC estimate that 40-50% of U.S. citizens are apprehensive or will refuse to take the vaccine. This reluctance is expected to prolong the country's ability to flatten the curve and ultimately return to some sort of normalcy. Here at St. John's, there will be on going education for residents and staff members related to the vaccination's safety and measures taken to deliver a safe and effective vaccine. I will continue to provide vaccine updates as they relate to our community.

And sadly, our battle with the pandemic continues. Last evening's news reported that Monroe County logged in a new high of 678 confirmed cases of COVID positives. 74% of these new cases in NY come from households. As we head into Christmas and New Year's holidays and subsequent weeks, this is hopefully a strong reminder for us to stay home this year and avoid travel and large family gatherings. The following is direct advice from a local county:

“Family gatherings, and dinners, card games, and other social activities with friends and neighbors have contributed to new cases. “The gatherings do not have to be overly large to produce multiple cases if one person in the group is positive without knowing it. Knowing the prevention practices of others during this time is a high priority to consider when gathering together to prevent the spread of COVID-19.”

What is the latest status here at St. John's Meadows and Brickstone by St. John's?

Considering the size of our two communities, we have been very fortunate to report a very low number of staff and residents being directly impacted by the virus since March. However, we currently have four staff members who are out due to testing positive and I have also learned that there are four community residents who have tested positive.

What measures are currently being taken to minimize the spread? We continue to screen any person who enters the community including staff members and home health aides, who enter any of the three main facilities. Weekly, we test all staff members who work within the Hawthorne neighborhood. We also have restricted social recreation, fitness, and the dining programs in order to discourage large gatherings. Several times throughout the day our great environmental service team members clean and sanitize all common areas of our buildings. We continue to limit family and friend visitations to designated areas. The wearing of appropriate PPE by anyone who is within any of our buildings remains mandatory.

That being said, social distancing, which means being 6 FEET APART, continues to be a measure that is extremely difficult to enforce as many believe they do not have the virus and will never get it. This year, DO NOT GO UNDER THE MISELTOE! Wearing a mask and staying a healthy distance from each other is the most effective way to stay COVID-19-free and to minimize the risk of spreading this virus to each other.

A wise man recently told me, "This virus is better at doing its job of infecting others than we are at not being infected by it."

Okay, let me get on to happier news. Annually St. John's Meadows and Brickstone by St. John's staff members enjoy a holiday party thanks to the generous donations made by you to the Employee Appreciation Fund. Each year the funds are used to support employee meals and gifts that are raffled for the benefit of all the hard working staff members. This year's celebration had to be modified in order to keep all team members' safe and COVID-19-free. Nevertheless, the entire team enjoyed socially-distanced, holiday-themed foods and snacks and a wide variety of gifts ranging from flat screen TVs to gift cards. Much appreciation goes out to the employee appreciation committee that works diligently throughout the year organizing and producing great events for the staff members' enjoyment. A special thank you to Tony, Cara, Lisa, Mark, Jennifer, Hanna, Kristen, Mandy and Megan for all your efforts! Also, thank you to the resident council members who yearly initiate this remarkable appreciation fund and to all the St. John's Meadows and Brickstone by St. John's residents who so charitably support the fund through their gifts.

In closing,

Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah to All!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul Bartlett".

Paul Bartlett

Vice President, Senior Housing