

Hi Everyone,

As we all are well aware, the number of COVID cases continues to rise across the country, in Ohio, and yes...we have had some additional cases at UCP of Greater Cleveland. We were notified today that two employees, including one in LeafBridge therapy services tested positive. All in contact with the individuals have been notified. At this point in time, we have fewer than ten (combination staff members and clients) who have tested positive and many others who have been tested as a precaution. I, myself, am scheduled for a test later this afternoon after having come in contact with a staff member who has tested positive. While we practiced social distancing and each wore a mask, we decided this was the best course of action. The leadership team was prepared for such a situation and has done a fantastic job of communicating both internally and externally as well as managing contact tracing, scheduling testing and all follow-up. Thankfully, all those who have been diagnosed with the virus either have no symptoms or manageable symptoms.

As Beth notified you earlier this week, Brittany George, our RN, can now test any of you who would like to be tested. She will be in touch early next week to share information and logistics about the program. This will require a pre-scheduled appointment to ensure that everyone is safe during the process.

Due to the number of cases at UCP, we have closed Wolstein for today and tomorrow (Thursday and Friday). The entire building will be professionally disinfected before the building reopens on Monday to LeafBridge and Administration. OakLeaf Day Services will resume services at Wolstein on Tuesday. We will then continue to monitor each and every situation and take appropriate actions that may include partial or full closure of on-site programming. We appreciate the flexibility of many of you who are switching to virtual service offerings and working from home. While this is not where we wanted to find ourselves and we ALL want to continue to serve our clients and families, we must remain vigilant in protecting everyone's health.

In his speech yesterday, Governor DeWine announced that cases in Ohio have more than quadrupled over the past month and hospitalizations have doubled. We hit a record daily high number of cases this week of 6,508. We have also seen a recent spike in healthcare workers succumbing to the virus which means, if the outbreak is not controlled, there may be a shortage of healthcare workers to care for not only COVID patients but also patients needing all other types of medical services.

There has been a rampant spread of the virus at gatherings such as weddings, banquets, and funerals so the Governor is going to issue a new health order placing restrictions on social gatherings. Meanwhile, experts advise that we are still several months away from a widely available vaccine. This brings to mind upcoming holiday celebrations that we will all want to plan. I must admit to you that one of my children invited my husband and me for Thanksgiving dinner along with their in-laws. As badly as we want to go and as difficult as it was to say no to their heartfelt invitation, we declined. Fortunately, our family understands and respects our decision. I'm guessing that is not always the case which can make these situations uncomfortable, or worse yet, cause hurt or hard feelings. I urge you to continue to do everything in your power to reduce your exposure! **PLEASE** do not spend holidays with someone outside of your household or outside of the "bubble(s)" you have developed. It is just not worth the risk! Let us, instead, do what we can to connect by phone or virtually over these holidays, look optimistically forward to the days ahead when we overcome this surge, bring down the alarming number of cases, and eradicate the virus once and for all.

We continue to thank you for all you are doing. Please let us know of any questions or concerns you may have and please take care of yourselves.

**Trish and the Leadership Team**

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