



Dear Families,

We know this is a challenging time for you and your family members. The isolation and loneliness that come along with not seeing loved ones is one of the hardest parts of this pandemic, but we are in this together. We are a community with shared values and a common purpose, and we will see this crisis through.

There are tremendous acts of kindness throughout our communities. These help us remember we are all connected even in this time of uncertainty. Several cities in Massachusetts have adopted the #ClapBecauseWeCare initiative to thank essential workers for all they are doing.

Our essential direct service workers are remarkable. They are learning to tailor services to support your loved ones and family members. They are doing this with tremendous grace and open heartedness. On behalf of our Leadership Team, Board of Directors, and others in our community, [we clap to thank our direct service staff.](#)



Updates:

We are grateful the number of people in the Advocates community with a positive Coronavirus diagnosis remains relatively low, however the cases throughout Massachusetts and the country are growing. With the availability of more testing, we anticipate that we will see numbers grow in the next days and weeks.

Our goal is to remain transparent about all going on in the Advocates community during this crisis. Unfortunately, that means sharing bad news. Since our last message to you, we have learned:

- **Four more employees were diagnosed.** Anyone who has been in direct contact with the employees has been notified. They are quarantined and recovering at home with guidance from their health care providers. Three of these staff were working in group living environments. In those cases, we have quarantined the homes and are testing all the individuals living in these homes and staff who work there.
- **A person we support in our Adult Family Care program was diagnosed.** Those who had close contact with the person have been notified and are taking appropriate measures to monitor their own health and symptoms. No

employee had contact with this individual during the time in which they might have been infectious.

- **A person we support in a group living environment was diagnosed.** All family members and staff who work in the home have been notified at this time. We have prepared for this and have implemented our policies, both with regard to contact tracing for the employees involved, and quarantining the group home in which the person we support lives. All staff and individuals in the home will be tested.

Our Human Resources and Services Teams continue to implement protocols to trace and track all contact for any suspected or confirmed Coronavirus diagnosis. These protocols help to ensure the safety and health of all in the Advocates community.

Masks and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

We are extremely grateful for the generous donations from friends of Advocates, family members, staff, and others in the community. With these contributions, every person living or working in a group home at Advocates now has a reusable mask.

We are waiting on more deliveries of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to help protect your family members and our employees. In addition to fabric masks, we have also received shipments of:

- 12,000 pairs of gloves
- 1,000 KN95 masks
- 1,500 disposable masks
- 300 face shields
- 179 surgical gowns

There is still a shortage of PPE in our communities. We are doing everything possible to ensure we have an adequate supply of PPE to help protect the safety and health of all. Our efforts and protocols continue to follow guidelines of the CDC.

Be sure to visit www.Advocates.org/COVID19 for updates and follow [Advocates Facebook](#) for daily resources to keep yourselves active and connected. Please let us

Family Communication COVID-19 Update 4/14/20

Subject Line: Your update from Advocates.

know if there's anything else we can do to help you and your family members during this time.

Sincerely,
Diane Gould
President & CEO

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