

**St. Joseph's Home for the Elderly
140 Shepherd Lane
Totowa, NJ 07512
973-942-0300**

November 20, 2020

Dear Residents, and Family Member,

We are pleased to report that we have no cases of Coronavirus among our Residents, Sisters or staff after this week's testing. We have one Resident result pending. However, as you may be aware, the Coronavirus testing positivity rate has gone up dramatically in our state and also around the county. St. Joseph's Home for the Elderly is committed to protecting the health and safety of our Residents, Sisters and Staff at all times and especially during the challenges presented by the spread of COVID-19. We understand the emotional impact that separation from your loved ones has caused. With the holiday season fast approaching, we understand that Residents and their families will want to spend more time together. During the holidays, St. Joseph's Home for the Elderly will follow the guidelines recommended by the New Jersey Department of Health, CDC and CMS.

On November 16, the NJ Department of Health issued "Holiday Visitation Guidance". The Guidance includes that **the NJ DOH strongly recommends against families taking Residents out of facilities for holiday celebration events or gatherings.** Residents who leave the facility, as per the Guidance, must be quarantined for 14 days in their room upon their return to the home in accordance with NJDOH and CDC guidance.

Should a Resident ultimately choose to leave the nursing home:

- **Limit close contact** (maintain physical distancing of six feet or more), keep gatherings as small as possible;
- **Wear facemasks** or cloth face covering at all times (including in cars, homes, restaurants, etc.);
- **Perform hand hygiene** often (e.g., wash hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer)
- If possible, conduct gatherings outdoors. Indoor gatherings should have good ventilation, open windows and doors if possible;
- **Verbally greet others** instead of shaking hands or giving hugs.

If you are contemplating taking a Resident out for Thanksgiving holiday celebrations, please call by November 23, 2020 to discuss your plans and time frames at 973-942-0300.

As always, our daily prayers are to bring an end to this pandemic so that we can all be together again. We pray for each of you each day that God will protect you and your loved ones in our care. May He bless you with a Happy and Healthy Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,
Mother Mary Thomas, lsp