



A Special Announcement



March 6, 2020

Dear Members of the Hebrew SeniorLife Community–

As you know, a new respiratory disease – coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) – is spreading globally and there have been instances of Covid-19 community spread in the United States.

Since I last wrote to you on Feb. 28, we have taken many steps to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in our community, and there are no confirmed cases at HSL at this time. Thank you all for practicing appropriate hygiene and preventive measures to protect the health and safety of our patients, residents, employees, and families.

The Covid-19 outbreak is evolving rapidly and while the risk of infection continues to remain low in Massachusetts, research shows that seniors and people with weakened immune systems are more vulnerable to severe complications. This is understandably worrisome and we want the HSL community to know that we are prepared and monitoring the situation very closely to best protect our patients, residents, employees, and families. In light of this data, and with new guidance from the Centers for Disease Control designed to prioritize the needs of older adults who are at the greatest risk, we are implementing the following additional measures to protect the seniors in our care:

1) Increased screening of Employees

- a. We have been, and will continue to, follow our established Flu protocol.
- b. In addition, all employees who recently completed or are planning international travel will require guidance from our Occupational Health Department before returning to work.

2) New screening of members of the public who come onto HSL campuses

- a. There are many people who come onto our campuses in the course of required business. This includes vendors, contractors, and job applicants; prospective residents and their families on tour; visitors; Marcus Institute study participants; and home and community based patients in adult day health, outpatient services and medical practices.
- b. All members of the public will be screened each time they visit and asked about cough, fever, shortness of breath, recent travel history and family or friends under Covid-19 surveillance or quarantine. We are requesting that staff and residents be vigilant about this in partnership to protect our communities.

3) Limiting External Visitors to HSL Campuses

- a. We are discouraging visitation onto all HSL campuses. In addition:
 - i. Volunteer and Multigenerational programs are suspended
 - ii. Special events that bring the community in from the outside are suspended

These new measures will bolster our ongoing and standard daily infection control efforts. Please remember:

- Wash your hands frequently.
- Avoid touching your face, i.e., eyes, nose and mouth
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow, not your hands
- Do not shake hands
- Stay home and get medical attention if you are sick

We will continue to monitor the situation and be prepared to implement changes quickly and responsively, and I will update you frequently as more information becomes available. While it is important to be prepared, it is equally important to remain calm.

Sincerely,
Helen Chen, Chief Medical Officer