



Precautions You Can Take About The Coronavirus

Call the **NJ Coronavirus & Poison Center Hotline** at
1-800-222-1222 or **1-800-962-1253** if using out-of-state phone line

Trained healthcare professionals are standing by to answer your call **24/7** OR visit
nj.gov/health

**Funny how this virus got here from China waaaaay faster than anything I've ever
ordered from EBay!**

Dear Providers

Over the course of the past few days, Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) has quickly shifted from a story we were following in the news to a very real threat facing our businesses, our employees, our families, and our residents. I have been thinking a lot about this current coronavirus outbreak and its implications, causing fear in our minds mostly because information seem to change and we are getting mixed messages.

When faced with situations like these, the human brain tends to oscillate between two modes: denial and panic. I think the best place to be is somewhere in the middle, as neither extremes are productive.

I wanted to take a moment to share some actions our industry can take as a result of the increased exposure to COVID-19, and to give you my honest perspective as a health care provider. You might not like what you hear, but so goes.

We operate in an industry basically serving a vulnerable indigent population often forgotten, or at the bottom of the priority barrel in times of crisis. If your facility is in a more affluent area your experience and perspective may be very different.

We all had cold and flu symptoms these past months – tests for the flu, but no way to test for Covid-19 so we must carry on. They say that testing is available, but they are prioritized. So, we may conclude that our residents are the lowest priority.

As a Health Care Provider, I spend many hours reading, inquiring and listening to the experts for a sense of direction relative to our vulnerable population. Nothing however specific for them, have been forthcoming. This illness can spread with mild or nonexistent symptoms, so it does not really initially trigger our innate defense mechanism of disgust and avoidance of disease.

The virus takes advantage of other basic human tendencies as well: our need to be social, our desire to believe that things will continue for the best, our inability to innately understand exponential growth.

So without serious interventions, let's be proactive as we know what happens when things escalate.

The goal right now is to understand how we can minimize the impact on our already fragile industry.

Social distancing is not a measure we can effectively employ.

Online Services...**Not**

Keeping Residents at home...**I don't think so**

Cancelling group activities because too many people in close proximity...**Oh well...**

How do we manage our residents then, who are hell bent on spending time at Newark's Penn Station, residents coughing on each other, eating cupcakes, licking their fingers? all normal stuff in other circumstances, but not today. More importantly our own fears.

Our job is to manage fear in our residents, our families and ourselves. But when we fear for our own safety, it may be very hard to reach out to others as intellectual understanding doesn't confer biological immunity. **So, let's get ready:**

Our governor said it best “ Don't Panic, Prepare”

Two of the core values at the heart of our industry are **Compliance and Care**, which simply translates to acting responsible and putting our people first.

It's with these values in mind that you **must** make decisions during critical times. It's also in times like these when we are reminded of the commitment we have to our staff and our vulnerable residents.

For us, that's being there when we're needed to protect and to advocate intense Health Maintenance and Monitoring Supervision in our facilities.

With these restrictions in mind a little background:

Most coronaviruses spread the same way other cold-causing viruses do: through infected people [coughing](#) and [sneezing](#), by touching an infected person's hands or face, or by touching things such as doorknobs that infected people have touched.

Guidelines:

- Enforce frequent hand washing for all employees and residents
- Sanitize all touchable surfaces frequently throughout the day
- Provide hand sanitizers in offices and common areas as appropriate
- Provide disposable tissues in all common areas and offices where residents and staff gather
- Review internal policies to remove and keep ill employees from the workplace until they are symptom free

It is further recommended that employees notify owners if they are sick and stay home, except to go to the doctor.

Residents and or employees who have symptoms of respiratory illness should stay home.

Residents with fever over 100.4F or greater, signs of any other symptoms for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicines should seek medical attention. Encourage staff and residents to avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Employees shall clean and disinfect touched surfaces and objects as they come in contact with and wash hands often.

Employees and residents should notify administration immediately if they become aware that they have had contact with someone that is sick or suspected of being sick from the COVID -19 virus.

If you have any questions during this challenging time regarding the coronavirus:

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Thank you for your ongoing partnership. And stay healthy.

Sincerely,

Irma Nyack, BSN.ARNP.LLb.MBA
RHCFA