

July 7, 2020

Re: Dangerous Virus Conditions in Mississippi

Dear team members:

For the last two weeks Mississippi, like the rest of the United States, has experienced large increases in COVID-19 infections. From June 1 until today the total number of cases has almost doubled. We are seeing many more cases in the community, rather than in long term care.

These “community spread” cases are especially dangerous to our elders because all of us who serve them live in the community.

Recently the Department of Health tested all of the elders and all of the employees in our four nursing homes—over 800 total tests. The results are amazing: no elders were positive and only five employees! Clearly, that is the result of two things. You are amazing people who provide amazing care; and wearing masks, hand washing, and social distancing work.

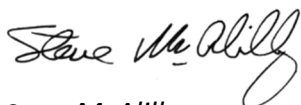
The significantly high community spread poses a new danger—that of our team members becoming infected and bringing the virus into one of our campuses. We must remain vigilant for each other and continue the safety practices that work. We have already seen an increase in the number of employee cases, tracking the rapid spread in the state.

As I said earlier—I don’t like wearing masks. They are hot. I feel like it means I’m “chicken.” I don’t like being told what to do. But the clear evidence and our personal experience is that **masks work! They save lives.** And we wear them because we care about others more than we care about ourselves. My wearing a mask is a gift of love from me to you. Again, while you are working at one of Methodist Senior Services’ campuses, you must wear a mask. It’s that simple.

Now that the danger in the community is so great, **please extend that love, the same kind of love from you to the elders, when you are out and about in the community.** Please care for your family members and the elders so much that you won’t be seen anywhere in public without a mask. And if you have to quarantine at home, quarantine at home. Quarantine is not a free pass for a vacation. And as stewards of our financial resources we will not provide “quarantine pay” if you are not actually staying in. If quarantined, you have likely been exposed to the virus, you might have the virus and infect someone you love, a friend or a complete stranger...and the virus continues to spread. I encourage our MSS team to unite and stop the spread of this terrible virus by continuing to wear masks, wash our hands regularly and social distance.

Difficult times often reveal your strengths and the strength of Methodist Senior Services lies in her people. Thank you for all that you do, and we trust you will do these things to protect yourself and the elders.

Change the world,



Steve McAlilly