

These questions and the answers were compiled by our clinicians, along with community and company leaders, to clarify the current situation for our Residents, their families, and our staff.

For any other questions, please remember to call our Family Support Line at 508-422-1841 to leave a message so we may return your call.

Resident Testing

Have all Residents been tested?

All Residents of SALMON Health and Retirement's nursing homes (Beaumont) and assisted living centers (Whitney Place and Whitney Suites) have been tested. There is no plan for widespread testing of Willows Residents, due to their ability to isolate in their living spaces. Those in independent living are being tested individually at this time, based on symptoms.

Has the number of positive test results declined as individuals recover?

Now that testing of all Residents is complete, we have a baseline by which to evaluate future results. We expect the number of positive test results among current Residents will decline as people recover.

How many Residents who tested positive for COVID-19 have died?

We have spoken with Resident families about individual deaths. All our Beaumont communities have experienced Resident deaths from COVID-19, and we extend our deepest sympathies to the families and friends of the people who have passed away. This has been hard on everyone.

How frequently will nursing home and assisted living Residents be tested after this?

Our next priority is baseline testing of our staff. Once staff baseline testing is completed, we will begin surveillance testing. That surveillance testing plan will consist of testing Residents and staff with symptoms, as well as random testing of both groups to identify asymptomatic cases. We are now working with our infection control experts and the Department of Public Health to finalize the surveillance plan.

Staffing

When will all staff be tested? Does this include assisted living staff?

Our plan is to test most of the staff by the end of this month. Once all staff has been tested and a baseline established, we will continue our vigilance with surveillance testing.

Will the number of positive staff results be reported?

Yes. We will continue to post positive staff on our web page.

What will happen if an asymptomatic staff member tests positive?

Any staff member who tests positive will be required to follow the CDC time-based guidelines for returning to work.

If many staff members test positive, will you be able to adequately care for Residents?

We have plans in place to manage staffing needs across all our locations if test results require employee quarantining. Our priority always remains the safe care and support of our Residents; we will carefully oversee all staffing during this period.

Will you re-test staff? If so, how frequently?

Our surveillance testing program will include randomly testing asymptomatic staff as well as staff who become symptomatic. Once a staff member tests positive and follows the time-based CDC guidelines to return to work, we will not re-test, due to the high likelihood of a false positive.

Ongoing Operations

How is your supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)? Has this been a problem?

Though there continues to be a worldwide shortage of PPE, we currently have enough to support good infection control. However, we continue to take steps to conserve those supplies to ensure we can manage this challenge into the foreseeable future.

Are you continuing to take extra precautions with cleaning?

Infection control and strong hygiene (including cleaning) remain a top priority. We have several steps to maintain a safe environment and routinely consider strategies to further enhance our approach. One of the methods in use is spraying an electrostatically charged mist of cleaner onto surfaces and objects. Electrostatic spray uses a specialized solution combined with air which is atomized by an electrode inside the sprayer. The spray contains positively charged particles which can aggressively adhere to surfaces and objects, cleaning them.

Are you considering creating other COVID-19 only facilities or wings?

We do not plan to create another all COVID-19 treatment and recovery center like Beaumont at Worcester. In our other centers, we have plans in place to cohort Residents based on symptoms and diagnosis. Due to the nature of the situation, this will sometimes require frequent room changes for Residents to move to the proper area of the center based on their medical condition.

What is the status of Beaumont at Worcester; is that center full?

We have been accepting patients from the greater Worcester area hospitals. The month of April was the busiest month for admissions in the history of that location. There are currently 70 patients; we have treated many more who recovered and were discharged to home.

Are you admitting new Residents? If so, what safety steps are being taken?

Yes, we are beginning to admit new Residents, but only under certain specific circumstances. We are open to admissions in our Beaumont locations after consultation and approval from the clinical team and medical director. In The Willows, Whitney Place and Whitney Suites, we are working on plans to admit some new Residents. Due to COVID-19, we have severely limited access to our buildings; as a result, there is no open-to-all admissions policy. If a prospective Resident qualifies for admission, they are tested prior to move-in and self-quarantining for a minimum of 14 days.

When will visits be allowed, especially for people who recovered from COVID-19?

We are currently not allowed to admit visitors, per order of the federal and state government. We understand the burden this policy has placed on our Residents and their families. As a result, we previously proposed options to the Department of Public Health (DPH) on this topic; our initial plan was turned down because the regulation does not allow visitation. We are continuing to work on ideas which support safe, socially distant visitation, and sincerely hope to arrive at a solution meeting the necessary precautions as soon as possible. In the meantime, our staff continues to arrange virtual visits for Residents with their families and friends.