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EP!C Families, Guardians, and Advocates,

5-16-2020

Since my letter last week, EP!C has had another resident test positive. This person is the fifth person to contract the virus in the same location as our first two positive cases. This resident is asymptomatic and doing well. I am happy to report all but one of the people who have tested positive over the last six weeks has recovered without hospitalization. As you can imagine, this news was very frustrating. We have followed all the recommendations from the health department, provided protective equipment for staff, altered staffing patterns to assure there is no cross-contamination between sites, implemented two-hour temperature checks, and maintained documentation on a 24/7 sterilization schedule. As our communities reopen at the end of May, we will continue to focus on preventing exposure to the virus.

The Media coverage this week was disheartening to those of us at EP!C. Media outlets are covering all long term care facilities (specifically nursing homes with positive cases). We know our numbers, but the general public doesn't know the details. The general assumption is that EP!C is one big nursing facility rather than a multifaceted organization with residents housed in multiple locations. EP!C to date has 17 cases, including the person who tested positive this week (9 residents and 8 staff). All positive cases occurred in one of three homes. We immediately notify families when their loved one may have come in contact with another resident or staff who has tested positive.

As we look to follow the Governor's Reopen Illinois Plan, I have put two teams together with the responsibility of developing the systems and protocols we will use to reopen the Townline location to visitors, our community homes to families, and our Educational/Employment Services to the people we serve. One team is focusing on workplace/environmental changes, and second is focusing on changes in service delivery models and timelines for reopening.

The reopening of Education Service will encounter the most challenges until at least the first part of FY21. Many of the people served in our Educational Services program have the most significant challenges and are the most susceptible to the virus. This next week we will be reaching out to our Home Based Families to get their input on expectations for reentering our Community Day Services (CDS) program. We are fortunate we have a very large facility and can better address some of the social distancing challenges. Last week, free of charge, Stanley Steamer professionally sanitized all the classrooms and common areas in Ed Services. We are very thankful for their gift!

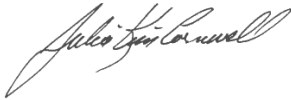
*Our Mission: To enrich the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.*

Currently, we are waiting for the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) to provide licensed programs like EP!C with the new requirements and restrictions involved in reopening Community Day Service Programs.

Remember at any time you have questions please feel free to call or email:

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Take care,



Kim Cornwell, CEO