



3rd July 2020

Dear Residents and Family Members

COVID-19 UPDATE – ALL FACILITIES

I hope this message finds you well in these trying times.

As the number of infections spiral throughout our country and particularly within Gauteng, the Chevrah Kadisha Group has unfortunately experienced an increase in positive cases over the past week.

We are heartbroken to have to inform you that we have lost two precious residents this past week. We extend our deepest, most sincere condolences to their families and wish them long life. *Hamakom yinachem etchem b'toch shear aveilei Tzion v'Yerushalyim* – may Hashem comfort them amongst the others mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

We have 34 new cases (since my last letter) across the group (nearly 1000 residents), most of which are asymptomatic or presenting with only mild symptoms. These residents are monitored very closely (every 4 hours we check their vitals) and are being well looked after. We have transferred four of our residents to hospital for treatment. We are also pleased to report that five residents have now recovered and will be coming out of isolation shortly.

Thank G-d, with all the very strict infection-control protocols we have in place, and by keeping our residents isolated in their rooms, we have managed to control the situation as much as is possible. We have been blessed - relative to the size of our facilities and the number of people we are caring for - to be able to contain the spread.

The situation, however, is extremely difficult to manage. The combination of asymptomatic staff together with our very frail and vulnerable residents, presents a tough situation. Many frail and vulnerable residents are completely dependent on close-contact care with our staff for their every need - feeding, changing, bathing, etc. We have almost 400 care givers on staff and although we are privileged to be able to afford full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for them, despite all our efforts there are circumstances that remain beyond our control. We are awed by the dedication of our outstanding medical teams who work tirelessly, putting themselves in harm's way, to care for our residents.

We are aware that some families have **private care workers** who look after their family members in Chev facilities. The Chev has provided these private workers with all the necessary PPE and training that is given to our own staff. We need to point out, however, that these care workers are in constant contact with your loved ones and that families must take responsibility for educating them about the appropriate steps they need to take to



protect themselves from infection when not at work. Three residents who have tested positive were as a result of their private care workers also having tested positive.

Keeping residents restricted to their rooms has been a major factor in containing the spread of the virus and we are convinced that it is critical to continue doing so for at least a further week. We are very conscious of the difficulties this causes them and cognisant of the need to keep their spirits up. Our Social Services and Programming teams are constantly busy providing emotional support and creative activities. **Please see the attached report** which provides a detailed description of all that has, and is, being done on a daily basis to boost their morale.

As Covid-19 approaches its peak in the country, we want to reassure you that we remain dedicated to the protection of our residents and to supporting them every step of the way. We will continue to do everything we can and we pray fervently for Divine intervention and the protection of our community.

My gratitude to our staff who are extremely stretched at the moment and working tirelessly to look after all our residents and to communicate with families. If there is anything to report on your own loved ones, we will contact you immediately.

These are challenging times. Please stay home if you can, and stay safe.

Best wishes



Saul Tomson
Chief Executive Officer
Chevrah Kadisha Group

PS Should you have any concerns or questions please contact the relevant facility during working hours:

Selwyn Segal: Belinda Bersiks 011 532 9709 / belindab@jhbchev.co.za

Arcadia: Elana Bannier 011 483 7507 / elanab@jhbchev.co.za

Lodge and Square: Vanessa Chesno 011 532 9635 / vanessac@jhbchev.co.za

Our Parents Home: Denise Bloom 011 489 7195 / deniseb@jhbchev.co.za

Sandringham Gardens: Cheftzi-vah Kruger 011 483 7425 / Cheftzi-vahK@jhbchev.co.za

Or, after hours, our emergency Helpline - 082 499 1010