



24th July 2020

Dear Residents and Family Members

COVID-19 UPDATE – ALL FACILITIES

I pray you are well and coping with these challenging times.

In this update I would like to address the issue of communication between us, as it is one of the big issues with which the Chev is grappling. We understand how difficult it has been over the past few weeks when you have not been able to make contact with your loved ones – particularly if they have been diagnosed with Covid and are in isolation.

From the start, way back in March and the beginning of the lockdown, the Chev has been very sensitive to this situation and immediately assembled our Skype and WhatsApp calling team to assist. To date over 1,000 Skype and WhatsApp calls have taken place during which families have been able to see, and speak to, their loved ones in residence - even from overseas. Many people have found the experience incredibly reassuring. Now, however, as people have been isolated and/or tested positive for Covid, residents are less accessible to their families and we are dealing with increased anxieties. While that is reasonable and understandable, we would like take this opportunity to remind families of our communication policies in order to manage expectations and promote cooperation.

1. As you know we have endeavoured to send out weekly updates every erev Shabbat to residents and families with the latest news and information and with any policy changes. We have also used this platform to explain decisions taken and protocols instituted, all of which are always done with the best interests of our residents at heart. We have provided open and honest communication from the outset and the feedback messages we have received have been mostly positive, supportive and encouraging.
2. We have nearly 1,000 residents across all facilities. For some time we have had a policy of identifying a **single designated contact person per family** and only providing updates to that person. That person is responsible, in turn, to pass on the information to the rest of the family. As you can imagine it is not possible for us to communicate with every family member of every resident.
3. We have also recently established a **medical communication team**. If your loved one has been diagnosed positive for Corona, you will receive three phone calls a week to offer you updates on that resident's progress. The calls will come from a non-medical person who will have been provided with the latest information about your family member.



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A doctor will only be on touch if there is a medical reason to do so. Rest assured that our nurses are checking vitals 4-hourly, or more frequently if required, and that our doctors visit each facility every day. All the residents in isolation, and particularly those who are not feeling well, are monitored closely. I'm sure that you understand how busy our doctors are right now. They do not have the time to communicate personally with families of residents who are in good health, asymptomatic or who have very mild symptoms.

4. Finally, regretfully, we are unable to act as the intermediary between hospitals and families. The hospitals themselves are overwhelmed and we can only advise that families do their best to be in contact with the hospitals directly if your loved ones have been admitted.

We thank you all for your understanding and cooperation as we do everything we can to protect and care for our residents. Please G-d we will soon come through these tough times.

Keep well and stay safe

Shabbat shalom



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