

Memorandum



To: Medford Leas Residents and Staff
From: James D'Amico, DO, FACOI, CMD
Date: April 14, 2021
Re: COVID-19 Update

It has been some time since I officially addressed you, certainly not since our successful vaccination campaign which ended last month. I hope you all are enjoying the spring weather as we continue to transition with nation and the State of New Jersey, to our "new normal."

I wanted to briefly comment of some concerns I have been hearing regarding the fact that a certain number of assisted-living residents are still becoming infected with COVID-19 after receiving the coronavirus vaccine. My response to these concerns is to remind you that most vaccines are developed to prevent severe illness and death. Mission accomplished.

The vaccines were not meant to completely eradicate COVID-19 from the world, and they will probably never be able to do that. It did not work that way with the flu shot, pneumonia vaccine, or shingles vaccine, etc. The vaccines were made to reduce hospitalizations and preserve the supply of ventilators. Again, mission accomplished.

In the initial trials with the Pfizer vaccine, there was a 94.7% efficacy rate when given to those over 65 years old. Now that these vaccines have been given for 4 months, the "real world" studies of vaccinated people have shown this number to be about 90%. This is still a phenomenal coverage. More important is the 100% effectiveness in preventing death from COVID-19. There is also enough prevention against all of the current circulating coronavirus variant strains to protect all of us from severe illness. The studies that were done, both pre- and post-release, were done in people over 65. I am sure if they did a subset of the population over 85 years old, the 90% result would be a little bit lower still. Therefore, if we have 100 residents on assisted-living there may be 10 or more residents, who, when exposed, may test positive for COVID-19. The good news is that thus far, because of the vaccine, they do not have any signs and symptoms of illness whatsoever. Not a fever, not a cough, nothing. Mission accomplished.

In fact, many experts are now questioning the previous concern that vaccinated people can transmit the disease. Personally, I think it is highly unlikely that a fully-vaccinated and asymptomatic individuals who test positive can transmit the disease. I know everyone has his or her different level of comfort. But I just wanted to say that I am fully confident in the fact that because over 98% of our independent residents are fully-vaccinated there is very minimal risk posed to those of you who gather with other vaccinated people.

Soon, NJ will be allowing more visitation on assisted-living. Nationally, the assisted-living population has been devastated both physically and mentally by these lockdowns. We hope that, when allowed, our family members will feel comfortable coming back and providing that much needed social support to our assisted-living population.

As usual, I am always available to answer any questions at any time. Stay safe and be well.