



SAINT MARY'S AT ASBURY RIDGE
SAINT MARY'S EAST

This communication was sent in an email on September 18, 2020.

Saint Mary's & COVID-19: Update #27

Just a few things to touch on this week but first, Saint Mary's East and Saint Mary's at Asbury Ridge continue to report zero cases of COVID-19. We have not reported a positive case since July.

Starting next week, both campuses will be in step three of reopening with visits taking place in the main lobby area of the respective campus. Visits specific to the Gallagher Center at Saint Mary's East will occur in the Gallagher Center lobby off Ash Street. We continue to be vigilant in our safety protocol – remember that if there is a positive case in our facility we must halt visits and achieve 14 days of no new onset of COVID-19 before visits can resume. We want visits to continue just as much as you do so we need everyone's help in making sure that proper precautions are followed.

Adult Day Services at Saint Mary's East has been closed since March. The program briefly reopened at the beginning of this week under a special reopening plan but due to lack of participation and ongoing COVID-19 concerns, Adult Day Services will close on September 25th and will likely remain closed through the remainder of 2020.

Next week, employees will be provided with plastic face shields as an extra precaution in preventing the spread of the virus. This comes after new guidance was issued regarding the need for increased eye protection for healthcare workers. All staff are required to wear the face shields in addition to facemasks whenever they are working or traveling through a resident care area.

We are working on conducting testing of all employees before the end of September. As mentioned last week, we are required to test all employees on a monthly basis. Residents will not be included in this testing. The frequency of testing could change dependent upon case status in our facility and the positivity rate in Erie County. To accomplish this we will be using a combination of the in-house rapid results testing device we received from the federal government and utilizing the services of the laboratory (ACL) with which we collaborate. While these rapid result devices are an added benefit in being able to test immediately upon suspicion and receive results within 15 minutes, they can only process so many results per hour and the results from this form of antigen testing are not considered the "gold standard." The device functions mainly as a screening tool. Anyone who receives a positive test result from the antigen test must then also receive a molecular test that is verified through an external laboratory. To be clear, neither the molecular test nor the antigen tests are antibody tests. As always, we will notify you if there is a positive result.

If there are any questions or concerns, please let us know. Thank you!