

An Update From Allen Cress

Hello Edwards Center Families,

I remain very pleased to report that we still have not seen any diagnosed or presumptive cases of COVID-19 among our residents or staff. Thank you for your concern, prayers and positive thoughts!

Oregon's Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS) issued a mandate earlier this week that requires that our staff use masks any time they are engaged in direct care effective 5/22/2020. This includes residential staff and Job Coaches. The new policy is based on a study published by Syracuse University that indicates people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities experience higher rates of negative medical effects as a result of COVID-19. You can find that study here: <https://lernercenter.syr.edu/2020/04/27/covid-19-and-pneumonia-increased-risk-for-individuals-with-intellectual-and-developmental-disabilities-during-the-pandemic/>. Implementation of the policy is delayed until 5/22 to give programs time to find and purchase masks. I'm sure you'll recall we took a proactive approach to this a few weeks ago, so many of our staff have already implemented the practice. To those family members who were able to make and donate reusable cloth masks, thank you! While we're well supplied today, we will, no doubt, need more soon.

We're beginning to see people move back into their supported jobs. As jobs open back up, we are going to great lengths to ensure the safety of both the people we serve and our staff. We're using our Personal Protective Equipment, practicing appropriate social distancing and frequently sanitizing surfaces. Staff in our homes are working with our residents to help them get used to wearing masks as we move toward whatever our "new normal" becomes. We're working with our employers to ensure they're all adopting best practices to keep us all safe. So far, they've been terrific partners!

We are moving forward with our efforts to reopen our Community Living Supports programs at ECM and Aloha. They will be reopened under a different model, compliant with all applicable rules and safety best practices. Stephanie Ruddell will continue to manage our ECM program and Sierra Crosby will remain the manager at Aloha. We don't have set dates yet; as with the rest of our community, we're closely watching how things progress, especially as communities begin to open back up. We will remain very cautious in our approach to reopening these programs.

We expect to see the state's budget projections next week. It will come as no surprise that they aren't expected to look good. Although I'm sure Developmental Disabilities services won't come through this unscathed, I am confident that as a system and as an agency we will get through this intact. We've been lobbying lawmakers heavily in recent years regarding the services we provide. They are aware of the risks to people with disabilities and the greater community if services are negatively impacted too dramatically. As an agency, our Board has long made it part of our financial policy to maintain operating reserves. That's part of how we ensure we're good stewards of the resources provided by our generous donors. This approach has also kept us financially stable. We will keep up to date with proposed funding changes and adapt as necessary to ensure this financial stability is maintained well into the future.

We remain grateful for all of your support! It's meant so much for our residents and teams to know we're not drifting out here alone. Thank you!

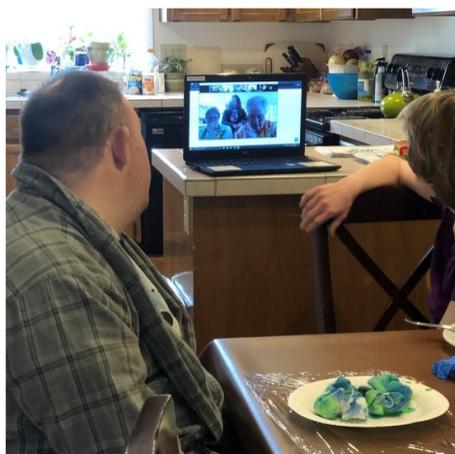
Let's all stay connected and healthy,

Allen

Staying Connected

This week at Edwards Center is **Spirit Week!** Our residents have been having fun all week with themed days to dress up, crafts and other activities based on different Spirit Days throughout the week.

In addition to fun things to do at home, many of our residents have been participating with daily zoom calls with other group homes to talk to some of their friends they have not been able to see while staying home. Here's a photo of some Century residents participating in a Zoom call while tie-dying some socks for Spirit Week!



Stay Up To Date

We have dedicated a page of the website to keep you up to date on all things related to COVID-19 at Edwards Center.

[VIEW THE PAGE](#)

We're In This Together

In these uncertain times, our highest priority is the health and wellbeing of all Edwards Center participants and staff as we work hard to get back to business as usual. We are dedicated to high-quality communication and welcome any questions at any time.

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