

3/12/2020

Dear Parents, Guardians and Stakeholders:

I am writing to provide information on our efforts to be prepared and provide timely and accurate information to parents, guardians, and stakeholders in light of the global COVID-19 Pandemic.

Our action steps are outlined below and have been developed based on guidance from the CDC, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, OSHA, the Department of Developmental Services as well as the input of our executive leadership team. Our actions are out of an abundance of caution, but we feel they are necessary steps to decrease the chance of illness. As of Friday, March 13, 2020 we will be temporarily closing our Day Programs in Northborough and Attleboro as well as the Amego School for our residential students. At this point in time we will be open to day-only students in Franklin. Our Best Clinical division will remain open, but please note this is a very fluid situation with daily check ins that will result in ongoing communication with you.

**1. Education & Training:**

- A. We have and will continue to train staff on what Coronavirus is, how it is spread, preventing it, and symptoms to watch for. We will continue to do so as the information on this novel virus is ever-changing.
- B. Handwashing, cleaning and disinfecting are ingrained in staff at Amego, as this is part of our training provided on day 1 of employment. We have provided both written and visual reminders on the proper way to wash your hands and cover your sneeze and cough at all of our sites.

**2. Prevention:**

- A. We have put in place guidelines to clean and disinfect every 4 hours as well as prompting or providing hand over hand assistance with handwashing every 2 hours. Staff have been given instructions and a simple checklist to complete for both guidelines.
- B. We have begun taking temperatures with a temporal scanner thermometer upon entrance to our day programs, and once a shift for staff and once a day for individuals while in our residential settings. The Exergen temporal scanner thermometer is available in each program and is just as accurate as a rectal thermometer. We have extra thermometers should one break or stop working.
- C. We have temporarily suspended large group gatherings including internal Amego events as well as external events and outings. We are encouraging outings to parks, nature reserves, and neighborhood walks. Additionally, we are utilizing teleconferences when appropriate.

**3. Detection of illness:**

Monitoring for signs of COVID-19 begins with the above-mentioned temperature checks and being aware of any individual who has developed a cough and/or shortness of breath. With this monitoring we can detect early signs of illness and begin contact with the healthcare providers for advice and guidance. Amego nurses are available for telephone consultation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and immediate advice is available for all staff for individuals in our care. A temp and cough can be indicators of other infections and illness such as bronchitis, pneumonia and the flu virus. We will adhere to reporting protocols to public health authorities as necessary.

#### 4. **Staff Restrictions:**

Staff were advised of the following by our Executive Team:

- A. Currently, it is not advisable to travel anywhere out of the country. However, if you do choose to travel, upon your return, you will be required to contact your immediate supervisor for further instructions.
- B. Employees who become ill during or upon returning from travel with virus-like symptoms will need to contact a health care provider as well as the immediate supervisor for direction as soon as possible.
- C. Employees returning from travel who do not exhibit virus-like symptoms must contact HR upon return and may be directed to self-isolate for a period of 2 weeks prior to returning to the workplace depending on up to date CDC recommendations.
- D. Employees returning from travel should monitor themselves daily for a fever of greater than 100.3, coughing or shortness of breath.
- E. Employees displaying signs and symptoms of any virus (Flu or COVID-19) may not return to work until they have been fever free (below 100.3) and asymptomatic for 24 hours without the use of medications. We have implemented a protocol for all staff traveling effective immediately and until further notice (see attached *Staff Guidelines for Travel*).
- F. At this time the CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19. Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of illness (COVID-19) to help prevent the spread of germs. Amego is working with DPH and DDS on additional supplies of PPE equipment.
- G. Additionally, whenever possible, we are preventing staff from working at multiple sites within our agency in the hopes that transmission of illness will be less likely between sites.

#### 5. **Care of Ill Persons:**

Should an individual in our care test positive for COVID-19 OR have a suspected infection the following steps will be taken:

- A. Day Services participants will be sent home and will be asked to follow the current procedure for self-isolation and medical intervention.
- B. All recommendations will be case specific and will come directly from DPH. At this time our plan will be for residential participants to isolate for 14 days from the point of diagnoses, as well as follow any other advice provided by their treating physician. Isolation will include encouraging them to spend most of their time in their room. Meals, medications and activities will be provided in their room. All care will be provided by staff that will be using personal protective equipment as recommended by DPH. Should the individual exit their room or need to go out in the community (such as medical visit), they will be given a face mask to wear to decrease the likelihood of infecting others.

We have updated our organizational Pandemic Preparedness Plan and have developed programmatic continuity plans as well. As part of these plans, we have purchased bulk supplies of hand sanitizer, face masks, gloves, disinfectants, thermometers, and non-perishable food stocks so we do not find ourselves in a position of running out of essential supplies.

Our priority has, and always will be, the health and safety of the individuals in our care.

We welcome your feedback, ideas, questions and concerns. Please contact Jennifer Cullinan at [jcullinan@amegoinc.org](mailto:jcullinan@amegoinc.org) should questions or concerns arise.

Thank you for attention to this mater. We will continue to send updates and post on a regular basis on our website at <https://www.amegoinc.org/current-updates/> and on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/AmegoInc1971](https://www.facebook.com/AmegoInc1971).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Randall". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "R".

John Randall  
President & CEO  
Amego, Inc.