



Dear Fellow Aspire Employees and Providers,

I continue to be impressed by the work that you do every day to keep people safe while supporting them to maintain a high quality of life. What we have accomplished together during this challenging time inspires me every day. To name a few, NH started an online social program called *Aspire Online!* to keep individuals connected, Connecticut successfully re-opened the schools for in-person learning, Massachusetts had a full month 100% free of restraints, and Maryland continues to be a role model for continuity in service delivery.

We also know the news is not all good. We have suffered tragic losses in our community. This is a time for us to come together with compassion for each other. I'd like to remind you that we offer our Employee Assistance Program to all employees, shared living providers and those in your household who may be struggling, whether concerns arise from the pandemic, inequality and unrest, economic hard times, and the plain fatigue of managing all that troubles us. Please contact your local strategic human resources partner to get connected. Thanks to the skilled clinicians on our team, we are also organizing drop-in support sessions. Details about these sessions will be shared with the entire agency shortly.

We all remain at risk from COVID-19. Sadly, we as employees and providers are the most likely source of infection for those we support. I urge you to remain vigilant as winter approaches and as cases are rising nationwide. Screening, mask-wearing, distancing, and hand hygiene are all **just as important today as they were last spring**. In addition, good ventilation is emerging as an important factor in reducing risk. So, open the windows, increase air flow, or choose well ventilated locations whenever you are with people who aren't part of your household.

We do have more information and tools available today to help us reduce our risk and to help all of us better support the people we serve than we did when COVID first emerged. Aspire Living & Learning has created a new and improved [COVID Resource Center](#) on our website. There you will find the following information:

1. **Risk Calculator:** Heading to the grocery store, deciding on how to spend your day off, planning a gathering? The risk calculator, by Brown University's Warren Alpert Medical School, is a robust tool that calculates your risk for COVID-19 based on several factors. The tool also gives users ideas about how to lower the risk of your "activity."
2. **October COVID Webinar:** Created by Le'Ann Milinder for NH employees and providers, this 40 minute webinar includes up-to-date information about COVID, it's prevalence in our communities, and Aspire's expectations of employees and providers. Worth a listen!

3. **Holiday Planning:** Aspire Living & Learning is following CDC guidelines in regards to holiday planning. We've included a link on our website and encourage all employees to follow. Know the risks and plan accordingly.

We at Aspire Living and Learning are committed to ensuring the health and safety of employees, providers, students, supported individuals and their families. To that end, we will continue to update the web site, so check back frequently. We will also continue to communicate pertinent information via email.

Again, thank you for your diligent commitment to health and safety. All those we serve, their families and everyone touched by Aspire Living & Learning is better off because of your hard work.

Please know that we are here to support you. Reach out with questions and concerns

Sincerely,



Lou Giramma, CEO

