



For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

The Arc
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To: The Arc of South Norfolk Persons Served, Families and Staff:

From: Daniel Burke, President & CEO 

Re: Healthcare reminders regarding the Flu/ Virus prevention

As many of you know, the outbreak of the flu in Massachusetts has taken on increasing numbers as well as expanding on a national basis. In addition, the outbreak on an international level of the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) has created significant publicity.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, there have been 30,000 case of the Flu diagnosed in Massachusetts through last week and a small number of cases of the Covid-19. The incidence and chance of contacting the Covid-19 remains very low but the incidence of contracting the flu remains high.

The Mass. Department of Public Health reminds people to consistently take the following steps

1. **Wash your hands with Warm Water and Soap for 10-20 seconds and/or use a greater than 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer whenever you return home from ANY activity that involves locations where other people have been.**
2. **It is recommended to reduce greatly activities such as Handshaking and Close Hugging. Use a fist bump, elbow bump, half-shoulder type of hug etc.**
3. **Use ONLY your knuckle or elbow to touch light switches. elevator buttons, turn on faucets etc..**
4. **Open doors with your closed fist or hip - do not grasp the handle with your hand, unless there is no other way to open the door. Especially important on bathroom and office/commercial doors.**
5. **Use Disinfectant wipes and disinfectant spray or wipes to wipe down your cell phone, carts in supermarkets**
6. **If possible, cough or sneeze into a disposable tissue and discard. Use your elbow only if you have to. The clothing on your elbow will contain infectious virus that can be passed on for up to a week or more**
7. **If you are involved in providing personal care for a person, please follow Universal Precautions in order to protect both you and the person for whom you are caring.**
8. **If you have not gotten the flu vaccine, Mass. DPH still strongly recommends getting the vaccine.**

In addition, I wanted to let you know some of the steps that The Arc of South Norfolk is taking In order to best prepare our programs to maintain a healthy environment:

Achieve with us.

- 1. Bathrooms are washed 2-3 times per day including wiping down all hard surfaces.**
- 2. We will be increasing the number of times that all door handles, faucets and entrance handles are being wiped down with a disinfectant. We have purchased a large supply of hand sanitizer and hand soap already in preparation for increased usage.**
- 3. We strongly encourage people with a fever, flu-like symptoms or upper respiratory symptoms, to stay home from the program (both staff and participants) and if symptoms persist please seek medical attention.**
- 4. Disinfectant sprays are used on all surfaces throughout the programs during the day and as a part of our cleaning program.**
- 5. Lifeworks and The Arc continue to encourage all staff to get the flu vaccine. If your health insurance does not cover it, our agency will reimburse employees for the cost of vaccine.**

Most importantly, it is the goal of Lifeworks and The Arc of South Norfolk to have the best interests of everyone we serve, our staff and their families in situations like this. We are focused on the well-being and health of everyone. We will keep you informed as we receive information from our local and state Departments of Public Health.