



March 6, 2020

Dear Lifematters Clients, Representatives, and Family Members,

As you are likely aware, a new disease caused by a respiratory virus, the Coronavirus (COVID-19), was first identified in Wuhan, China in late 2019 and has been spreading across the globe. In the United States, there have been a small but growing number of people who have become ill with COVID-19. Experts anticipate that the number of cases in the U.S. will increase through person-to-person transmission, as it has in other communities in countries with no direct connection with travel to China.

Lifematters believes that its role as a home care provider is to help prevent and control the spread of the COVID-19 disease while protecting our staff and clients. We have developed an operational policy to set forth these guidelines. A copy of the policy is posted in all operational offices and is available upon request. Providing you with the most up-to-date and accurate information is central to our goal of ensuring your health and safety.

Transmission of the COVID-19 Coronavirus

COVID-19 is thought to be able to spread like the cold or flu through:

- Coughing and sneezing, which creates respiratory droplets
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it

Risks to the Public

Currently, the risk for exposure in the U.S. is considered low. People are at risk who:

- Recently traveled to any geographic area of concern
- Have close, personal contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19
- Care for people with COVID-19

Symptoms and Prognosis

Symptoms may appear in as few as two (2) days or as long as 14 days after exposure and include:

- Fever
- Coughing
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- In more severe cases, pneumonia (infection in the lungs)

The best way to prevent infection with any communicable disease, including influenza and COVID-19, is to avoid exposure. The following are simple but important measures that you can practice as part of your daily routine:



- Wash your hands often with soap and water for a duration of at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Avoid close contact with people who are ill or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.
- Try to get adequate nutrition and sleep to promote a healthy immune system.
- Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoid sharing utensils, drinking glasses, and make up products with other individuals.

Lifematters has informed our staff and caregivers to contact their doctor immediately if they are exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and have been in close contact with someone known to have COVID-19, or if they have recently travelled to an area with a COVID-19 outbreak. Any caregivers that have recently travelled to an area with a COVID-19 outbreak and who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 will be temporarily removed from work for surveillance until a medical clearance from a physician has been provided to Lifematters.

If you have recently traveled to any geographic area of concern or have had contact with someone with COVID-19, and you begin to feel sick with a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, please seek medical care immediately. We ask that you also alert our office as soon as possible, in the event that a Lifematters' caregiver may have also been exposed while providing care services to you.

Lifematters must notify the local Department of Health for any suspected case of COVID-19 and will follow the guidance provided by that governmental agency.

We suggest that you keep your home prepared by having an adequate supply of non-prescription drugs and other health supplies (pain relievers, stomach remedies, and cough and cold medicines); checking your regular prescription drugs to make sure you have an adequate supply and obtaining refills as needed; having a thermometer, tissues, and hand sanitizer in case you become ill and must stay at home to recover; and having a two-week supply of food and water available at home.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the office at 301-652-7212 or 571-282-2600.

Thank you, and please stay healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Houck, RN MS
Director of Clinical Services
Lifematters