



News Release

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Wichita Presbyterian Manor gives COVID-19 update

WICHITA, Kan. – One week after recording 22 new cases of COVID-19, Wichita Presbyterian Manor has identified 4 new cases of the virus since January 1. In addition, one resident who previously tested positive for the virus died.

“We are saddened by the death of this resident,” said Courtney Wolfe, executive director. “Our residents are like family and it is always difficult when one passes. The resident’s family is in our thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.”

The resident had been cared for by designated team members who followed Centers for Disease Control and Prevention protocols for infection control and prevention and physician’s orders.

The community conducted surveillance testing on January 4 and January 6. Four new cases of COVID-19 were identified among staff members in the January 4 testing. No new cases were identified among residents, and no new cases were identified among staff from the January 6 tests.

Two essential health care workers tested positive for COVID-19 on Monday with rapid point-of-care (POC) tests, and two non-direct resident care employees tested positive for the virus. One of the essential health care employees reported symptoms to their supervisor on the way in to work and was tested prior to entering the building. The employee last worked January 3. The second essential health care employee received a POC test because they were unable to participate in the regular surveillance testing Monday morning. The employee last worked December 31. Both non-direct resident care employees last worked Tuesday, January 5. The employees passed pre-shift screenings and wore personal protective equipment as required.

The employees are quarantining at home and will not be allowed to work until they meet CDC and KDHE guidelines for when an employee may return to work. Under the current guidelines, symptomatic employees may return to work when at least 72 hours have passed since resolution of the employee’s fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and the employee’s symptoms have improved and at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared. Asymptomatic positive employees will quarantine for at least 10 days. Upon the employee’s return to work, we will follow CDC recommendations related to work practices and restrictions.

Our focus remains on ensuring the well-being of our residents and employees. We continue to follow all guidance related to patient care, employee safety, and efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19, as provided by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). We are working closely with Jeanne Gerstenkorn, PMMA’s infection preventionist and vice president for health and wellness, in implementing our Emergent Infectious Disease (EID) Outbreak Management Plan.

The Sedgwick County Health Department and Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) Epidemiology Hotline have been notified. We will test residents in health care, PATH, memory care and assisted living and all employees Monday, January 11.

We also will continue regular surveillance testing of employees. Based on our county positivity rate for COVID-19 tests, our campus is testing employees twice a week.

All residents and employees are encouraged to follow CDC guidelines and best practices as these are continually updated. The community regularly reinforces with all staff that an employee should not report to work if he or she is experiencing symptoms of a respiratory illness or not feeling well.

As the COVID-19 vaccine becomes available, it should play an instrumental role in eventually moving toward resuming our normal operations. Every person who receives the vaccine will strengthen the protection for all residents, staff and the community at-large. PMMA strongly encourages our families, employees and residents to carefully consider obtaining a vaccine for themselves as well as their loved ones.

For more information about Wichita Presbyterian Manor's response, go to PMMA's (Presbyterian Manors of Mid-America's) website, [Presbyterianmanors.org/media-room](https://www.presbyterianmanors.org/media-room).

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