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A Year's Long Wait is Finally Over for Residents of Adult Care/Assisted Living Communities in New York

New York Assisted Living Residents Celebrate Newly-Released Visitation Guidelines and the Resumption of Communal Community Activities

Clifton Park, NY, March 29, 2021 – The patience of thousands of NY seniors and their families has finally been rewarded with relaxed visitation and communal activities now being authorized by the New York State Department of Health, the regulating agency.

The Department of Health's new guidelines, issued on March 25th, has essentially opened the doors again for over 50,000 residents who call the assisted living community their home. This long-awaited guidance is based on the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMC) guidelines and allows for visitation more widely and for residents to go on outings without the heavy burden of having to quarantine for 14 days upon return.

"Assisted living residents, family members, providers and staff have been through an extraordinarily difficult year. For providers, keeping COVID-19 out of buildings has been the core focus, but the human and emotional costs cannot be overstated," said Lisa Newcomb, Executive Director, Empire State Association of Assisted Living. *"The new guidance will allow more frequent and meaningful interactions between residents and their loved ones."*

Newcomb makes note of some particularly significant changes that the new guidance makes, including that visitation and other activities will no longer need to be shut down for 14 days for all residents if there is a new positive resident or staff case. In addition, standards for group activities and communal dining have been relaxed. These changes mean that residents will be able to enjoy time with their fellow residents, that they call friends, and enjoy all the wonderful amenities and activities provided by their assisted living community.

"The vaccine is the game changer. The overwhelming majority of our residents are fully vaccinated. Due to the pronounced efficacy of the vaccines in preventing COVID-19, the NYS Department of Health has given residents and providers the much-needed green light to re-open their doors and provide for a more active lifestyle for the seniors in our care," added Newcomb.



About Empire State Association of Assisted Living

Empire State Association of Assisted Living is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to strengthening New York State's assisted living sector and promoting the best interests of providers and residents. Founded in 1979, ESAAL is the only association that exclusively represents the assisted living industry, serving 300 Assisted Living Residences, Adult Homes, Enriched Housing Programs and Assisted Living Programs throughout New York State. These member residences are home to more than 30,000 seniors.