



## **For Immediate Release**

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## **JUNIPER COMMUNITIES TESTING RESIDENTS AND ASSOCIATES FOR COVID-19**

### **Senior living's proactive approach to limit illness and death rates**

Bloomfield, NJ --- [Juniper Communities](#), a national owner-operator of seniors housing communities announced today it will begin full testing of consenting residents and associates in its communities as a proactive measure to further protect chronically ill older adults from the effects of COVID-19 . Testing has begun today and will be completed across Juniper's communities as quickly as possible.

“We care for the most frail and susceptible population. Senior living communities are the first line of defense for 3 million citizens most at risk for complications and even death from this virus. They and their families rely on senior living to keep them healthy and safe,” said Lynne Katzmann, Juniper's CEO and founder. Staff wellbeing is also a primary concern. “Our associates come to work every day dedicated to providing care to the residents, and we want to minimize the risk to them and those they care for.”

The CDC [released information yesterday](#) indicating that the virus has graver impact on older adults with the chronic conditions typically found in seniors' housing residents. The data suggest 8 out of 10 deaths reported in the U.S. have been in adults 65 and older. More concerning to senior living, 31-70% of COVID-19-positive patients aged 85+ require hospitalization, while people ages 65-84 are also at risk of needing hospital care (31-59% of this age group). Senior living communities focus primarily on these at-risk ages. Katzmann stated, “Hospitals are clearly reaching their capacity. We hope to do our part with this initiative to flatten the curve and prevent new infections with full testing across our communities in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Colorado.”

Katzmann said the company's testing initiative is based on the need to have actionable data to build a comprehensive and proactive plan. She noted Juniper has procured the tests through private/commercial vendors using CDC-qualified reagents and operating under the FDA's Emergency Use Authorization. “We are not taking needed tests away from state health organizations, medical providers, or hospitals,” Katzmann continued. “The opening of the pipeline by the FDA is making greater testing available to everyone.”

Test results will be used to confirm symptomatic individuals for isolation, identify asymptomatic individuals for segregation, and change staffing patterns to further limit cross-contamination.

“For the time being we need to dramatically reduce the number of individuals who interface daily while maintaining our high levels of care. Testing data is absolutely critical for us to put additional precautions in place—ones which appear to have had success in other countries,” Katzmann commented.

The true rate of infection within senior living communities is unknown across staff members and residents, so Juniper has made the decision to test residents and staff at their communities. Juniper believes this critical missing data point is the tool that will enable them to make decisions as to how to better manage the disease in their communities.

Juniper has been following guidelines and recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Centers for Medicare/Medicaid Services (CMS) and the public health regulatory agencies for each state in which they operate. The precautions include but are not limited to: limiting access to communities to essential visitors only, screening and temperature monitoring of staff and essential visitors, enhanced infection control and cleaning procedures, social distancing and self-isolation, and in-room dining service only. Juniper monitors guidelines daily and updates practices as new information becomes available.

Juniper Communities has long been recognized as an innovator, finding solutions from outside the industry to tackle problems such as energy efficiency, purpose in life, and reducing social isolation and loneliness in elders. “We’ve successfully cared for residents through natural disasters such as Hurricane Irma without loss of life. This is the greatest challenge we have ever faced. Full testing is clearly the correct next step.” said Katzmann.

Nasal swab tests were ordered in sufficient number to test community members—residents and associates. Working in conjunction with community’s primary care providers, appropriate prescriptions were received prior to ordering of tests.

Juniper recognizes this approach has limitations. While the test is not 100% accurate, even a 70 to 80% accuracy rate should improve outcomes. There will be need for ongoing testing and surveillance, particularly with staff who go out into the wider community after their shifts.

According to Katzmann, “While we cannot predict the outcome of this pandemic, it is our hope that by extending our precautions beyond what is required we can limit exposure in our communities and continue to care for everyone at the high standard we have always maintained.”

### **About Juniper Communities, LLC**

Juniper Communities, a leader in quality, value and innovation in long-term care, operates communities in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Colorado that emphasize residents’ well-being, interaction and security. Our communities and approach to housing and care offers residents the opportunity to live a full life, regardless of age or health. Juniper’s innovative Connect4Life program has been proven to improve residents’ care by decreasing hospitalizations, re-hospitalizations and urgent care visits, while offering potential cost savings to public programs such as Medicare. To learn more about the many ways Juniper Communities innovates in support of our residents, please contact us at: [www.junipercommunities.com](http://www.junipercommunities.com) or 973.661.8300.

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