



December 10, 2020

Dear Residents and Family Members,

By now you have probably learned that COVID-19 vaccines will soon be ready for distribution to health care workers and residents in long-term care. I have long awaited this exciting news.

I understand that some of you may be concerned about the safety of these new vaccines, as they have been developed and tested far more quickly than those in the past. I want to assure you that the speed with which these vaccines were developed is not due to skipping important safety steps, but rather the result of focused, collaborative work performed by experts across the globe. Vaccines approved for emergency use by the US Food and Drug Administration have undergone the same level of rigorous testing for safety and efficacy as other vaccines and have been tested with tens of thousands of people, including older adults. Two independent advisory committees of experts from academic institutions also monitor vaccines to ensure their safety.

Most of COVID-19 vaccines available in the US require two separate doses, given about three or four weeks apart depending on the vaccine. Some participants of clinical trials have reported experiencing short-term side effects after being vaccinated, with more pronounced discomfort after the second dose. These possible side effects include headache, muscle pains, fatigue, chills, fever, and pain at the injection site. Sometimes there is misunderstanding about the cause of these reactions, as you may have heard someone say a vaccine has “made them sick” or given them the disease that the vaccine was intended to prevent. I want to be clear that this is not the case. The COVID-19 vaccine cannot give you a COVID-19 infection or disease. The vaccine works by helping the body create antibodies to fight off the virus. Feeling discomfort after getting the vaccine means that the vaccine is doing its job and your body is making antibodies.

The Mather Life Centre, along with thousands of other long-term care facilities, is participating in a program with the Centers for Disease Control to help efficiently distribute these vaccines to residents free of charge once they are available. We will keep you informed of this process as we move forward. Employees will also have the opportunity to get vaccinated through this program.

Please know that the safety and well-being of staff and residents have been and remain our top priority. I am confident that the worldwide, unprecedented scientific achievement of these COVID-19 vaccines will eventually enable us to enjoy life with loved ones again.



The Mather will continue to share more information as it becomes available.

I look forward to participating in this effort by getting the COVID-19 vaccine and hope you will join me.

Sincerely,

*Leo Kanev*

Leo Kanev, MD  
The Mather Medical Director



12/10/20