



National Church Residences

MEDIA CONTACT

Todd Hutchins

Director of Public Relations

thutchins@nationalchurchresidences.org

614.381.9853

Central Ohio Collaboration Introduces Rapid COVID-19 Testing Innovation

Post-Acute Test Results for Vulnerable Seniors Delivered in 24 Hours

COLUMBUS, Ohio, April 16, 2020 — [National Church Residences](#), [Central Ohio Geriatrics](#), [Ohio Living](#) and [LeadingAge Ohio](#) today announce a unique partnership to deliver rapid turnaround of COVID-19 testing for vulnerable seniors in post-acute settings including 1,500 nursing homes (skilled and long-term care) and assisted living facilities in Franklin and surrounding counties. The new Post-Acute Regional Rapid Testing (PARRT) program launched this week in cooperation with the Ohio Department of Health, Franklin County Health Department and Columbus Health Department, with additional funding provided by The Columbus Foundation.

In just one week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recorded a 172% increase in the number of U.S. long-term care facilities that have at least one reported case of COVID-19. Without rapid preventative testing, the number of reported cases will continue to grow exponentially.

“For most individuals, the normal path to testing is a visit to a primary care physician followed by a visit to a testing site,” noted National Church Residences Chief Medical Officer John Weigand, MD. “This is impractical for at-risk seniors and we want to provide a more direct route to testing for our residents in skilled nursing and assisted living communities.”

PARRT offers COVID-19 testing within 24 hours of symptoms arising and operates seven days a week, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. A team of two technicians, including one skilled medical professional and an assistant, collects swabbed specimens at each site, then delivers samples securely packed in an ice chest to an Ohio Department of Health lab that turns around results within a day. The swab team, trained by The Ohio State University, is suited in full Personal Protective Equipment, including a fit-tested N-95 mask, face shield, gown, hair covering, shoe covers and gloves.

This innovative new testing protocol results in quicker care intervention for COVID-19 positive cases. A second benefit is contact assessment to determine additional testing needs, including



National Church Residences

subsequent care interventions and precautionary measures such as quarantine. The overarching goal is heightened infection prevention for impacted areas.

“Our Chief Medical Officer noted a need in COVID-19 testing services and stepped up to close the gap,” said National Church Residences President and CEO Mark Ricketts. “His relationships with the Ohio, county and city departments of health have helped to drive this innovation to meet the very urgent needs of the post-acute environment.”

National Church Residences is expanding its existing COVID-19 hotline to facilitate rapid testing requests with a new, dedicated line for PARRT. Launched in late March to facilitate staff relocation to the frontlines throughout National Church Residences, this hotline will expedite communications and activate the new testing process at scale.

Laurence Gumina, CEO of Ohio Living says, “PARRT will help to identify cases and control any outbreaks within facilities, further flattening the curve. We are helping to preventatively manage the surge for hospital systems.”

LeadingAge Ohio, National Church Residences and Ohio Living are providing initial financial support for the innovation and its application across regional facilities serving 15,000 residents. The Columbus Foundation’s Emergency Response Fund has awarded \$100,000 to support the PARRT program. Testing costs for those covered by Medicaid will be fully reimbursed.

“We hope successful deployment of PARRT in Franklin and its contiguous counties will pave the way for replicating the process throughout the entire state of Ohio,” said CEO Kathryn Brod of LeadingAge Ohio. “The goal of this new testing program is to safeguard as many vulnerable seniors and healthcare workers as possible.”

About National Church Residences

National Church Residences serves more than 42,000 seniors through its array of housing and health care services. The not-for-profit organization is driven by a vision of advancing better living for all seniors, enabling them to remain home for life. With 340 communities in 25 states and Puerto Rico, it is the nation’s largest not-for-profit provider of affordable senior housing and the largest manager of service coordinators. The organization also offers residential senior communities, home and community-based services, as well as permanent supportive housing for the formerly homeless and disabled. For more information, visit NationalChurchResidences.org.

About Central Ohio Geriatrics

For the past decade, Central Ohio Geriatrics, LLC has been caring for seniors in skilled nursing and long term care facilities, assisted living communities and medical offices. These offices are



National Church Residences

staffed by dedicated, specially trained geriatricians and Advance Practice Providers (Physician Assistants and Certified Nurse Practitioners) who are committed to providing consistent primary care and wellness services to patients throughout Central Ohio.

About Ohio Living

Ohio Living is one of the largest and most experienced not-for-profit, multi-site senior living organizations. Each year, Ohio Living serves more than 73,000 people through one of our 13 life plan communities and Ohio Living Home Health & Hospice. Our Ohio-based services range from a variety of housing options in one of our communities through the full continuum of care to post-home health and hospice support for adults, wherever they live. Additionally, the Ohio Living Foundation raises several million dollars annually to support charity care, special programs, capital expansion and endowment.

About LeadingAge Ohio

Founded in 1937, LeadingAge Ohio is a nonprofit organization that represents over 400 long-term care organizations and hospices, as well as those providing ancillary health care and housing services, in more than 150 Ohio towns and cities. The continuum of care reflected by the member organizations serve an estimated 400,000 elderly Ohioans daily and employ more than 35,000 persons statewide.

###