



April 3, 2020

Greetings to our Arc of the South Shore community. Today we are 10 days into the Governor's emergency order requiring all non-essential businesses and organizations to close their physical workplaces to workers, customers, and the public until May 4.

Despite this pandemic, I am happy to report that The Arc of the South Shore is strong and operating at full speed. Most days it seems we are all in overdrive!

All of the employees of The Arc of the South Shore have been faced with unprecedented challenges over the past several weeks as the Coronavirus pandemic continues to spread. I am proud of our workforce for stepping up and taking on these challenges.

**Our employees demonstrate our *community in action* at its *BEST!***

I wish to acknowledge our Residential staff and deployed Day Program staff who are facing the most significant challenges every day and nevertheless, continue to provide excellent care to vulnerable individuals in our group homes. **Kudos to all employees working in our group homes! Thank you to Lisa Weeks and her excellent Residential team.**

Unfortunately, this past week one individual was diagnosed with Covid-19 requiring one house to be placed in quarantine. The other residents have been tested. One individual tested negative, and we are awaiting results of the other. I cannot be prouder of the staff who are working with these individuals in the confines of a quarantined house. They are outstanding human beings and we are so grateful to have them on our team.

The senior management team have worked tirelessly to support our group homes throughout this difficult time. Highlights include:

- searching for and ordering personal safety equipment and cleaning supplies
- creating enhanced pay structure for people who work in a quarantine group home
- deploying Day Program staff to help with coverage and other support functions.

Every day a new challenge emerges that we tackle together as a team.

Not only are our Residential staff doing incredible work, but all other departments have stepped up to continue their program operations working remotely. Our dedicated team

of employees are committed to staying connected to our individuals and families. Our Adult Foster Care and Personal Care Management staff are doing an excellent job maintaining their caseloads and ensuring our consumers' needs are met. In addition, they continue to take in new consumers! Early Intervention staff continue to "see" families via telephonic visits and The Autism Resource Center staff take numerous information and referral calls daily.

Starting April 6, both day programs, Community Based Day Services, Pathways to Possibilities and the Day Habitation Program, will provide telephonic and phone call visits to our day program members and their caregivers.

Wonderful things are happening in Development despite needing to postpone our Summer Soiree until August. Brenda is working on appeals through a variety of social media outlets, COVID relief related grants, and new television ads being developed pro bono. Through social media requests, we have had donations of very much needed face masks, as well as generous financial contributions.

All employees working from home have access to their office phone extension voice mail and email. Please feel free to leave a message and someone will get back to you.

### **Ongoing Updates**

**Our website is the best place to find the most current information related to The Arc of the South Shore actions in the coming weeks and months.**

**[www.arcsouthshore.org](http://www.arcsouthshore.org)**

For the most up to date state information go to [www.Mass.gov/2019coronavirus](http://www.Mass.gov/2019coronavirus)

We are prepared to respond accordingly and navigate through any challenges with our clients, employees and community in the forefront. As this is a rapidly evolving event, we will continue to monitor and communicate information as needed. You are our members, part of our family, and together we will get through this situation.

Sincerely,

Daryl Cook-Ivan, Executive Director