



Dear Clients and Families:

December 14, 2020

I am writing to provide an update to my previous communication, in light of the continuing spike in COVID-19 exposure and infection cases in our region, and especially in light of the higher risks associated with the normal flu- and Holiday season gatherings during this time of year. Assured, we are taking every measure necessary to ensure the safety of our clients and our team members. Our caregivers screened daily and continually reminded of infection control protocols and requirements. We also continue to provide our employees with PPE, training, and also provide paid-leave for employees who require quarantining to try to eliminate the economic hardship concerns (that might otherwise cause them to try to “tough it out” if unwell). We are also working with the Virginia and local health departments to ensure prioritization for the vaccine, when it becomes available in the near future. We will encourage (and mandate if required by authorities) our employees to get vaccinated. While we continue with these extensive efforts, we want to make you aware that we are operating with an unusually reduced capacity of available staff. As a result, we thought it was important to remind you to please consider the following:

#### **Contingency Planning for You or Your Loved One**

- The continued spread, related state mandates and recommendations, and our own safety protocols have resulted in reduced staffing levels. This, along with the normal winter weather-related challenges, may cause extreme staff shortages that result in our inability to cover all shifts.
- We will make every effort possible to provide our clients with safe and appropriate care and seek to avoid canceling shifts; however, we cannot guarantee this will not occur given the continuing uncertainties.
- At all times, regardless of a viral outbreak or other situation, we strongly recommend that our clients have alternative arrangements for the provision of care, in the event we are unable to provide services. We encourage and remind you to put into place back-up plans as the pandemic and its related effects continue.

#### **What You Can Do to Protect Yourself and Your Family**

- Avoid contact with anyone that does not currently live in your household and try to eliminate unnecessary visitors in the home as much as possible.
- Consider instituting formal safety protocols for visitors to the home to include temperature readings and hand sanitizing upon entry, maintaining social distancing (6 feet apart) if possible, and use of face mask while in the home.
- Continue to comply with State recommendations while outside of the home and try to eliminate unnecessary travel outside of the home.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds - use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Frequent cleaning/disinfecting of surfaces (e.g., table-tops/counters) and common touch points (doorknobs/refrigerator-door handles, etc.).
- Eat well, drink lots of water and get rest to strengthen your immune system.
- Have a family emergency preparedness plan that includes care coverage and back up support, when possible.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact our office. Our team is committed to protecting our clients and team members and we thank you for your understanding and cooperation. I will continue to update you of any developments in the future.

In the meantime, our team wishes you and yours a very Happy Holiday Season and all the best for a health (and hopefully more “normal”) New Year!!

Sincerely,  
Juan Tuason  
President & CEO



November 18, 2020

Dear Clients and Families,

As we approach the holiday season, with Thanksgiving just around the corner, I wanted to provide you with an update on Paragon Home Care's continuing efforts to keep you and your loved ones safe during this pandemic, especially now as we witness dramatic increases in COVID-19 cases. Let me assure you that Paragon Home Care is committed to doing everything possible to protect you and your family and our caregivers during this very challenging time.

Our caregivers have been instructed on infectious disease control and understand the importance of hand washing, cleaning surfaces, wearing a mask and gloves as well as monitoring any change of condition. These practices have been followed throughout the pandemic and continue to be monitored. Our supervisory staff is always available for consultation and to answer any questions you may have. Our caregivers are also screened at the start of each shift and if they experience any change or if their client shows any symptoms, immediate action will be taken.

You can help by limiting visitors in your home. However, if you plan on having guests, please encourage them to wear masks and practice social distancing as much as possible. We want to keep you and our caregivers safe, so your cooperation is greatly appreciated!

Thank you for your trust in Paragon Home Care! We pledge our continued commitment to do everything we can to keep you and your loved ones safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Juan Tuason", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Juan Tuason  
President & CEO



May 7, 2020

Dear Clients and Families:

I wanted to provide you with the latest update and information with regard to the on-going pandemic. Thankfully, our amazing team of caregivers have continued to brave through the fear and uncertainty. Thus far, we have not experienced the shortage in availability of caregivers that we initially feared might occur! I think this recent headline says it best: "Home care aides are the 'hidden heroes' at the front line of this pandemic." Thanks to their continued courage and dedication, we've seen recent data that revealed that home care clients are hospitalized at a 25% lower rate than those in facilities; supporting the premise that is...Safer at Home!

Also, just a reminder that as the pandemic – and social restrictions associated with it – continue; we are making our **Paragon Neighbors** program available for free, as a community service (let your neighbors/friends in need know!). Through this program, we can provide rides to essential appointments, pickup/deliver prescriptions or groceries, run errands, do check-in calls, and more. We will prioritize requests from clients but will help anyone in the community as long as we have the capacity to do so. If you want more information or are in need of assistance; please call our Neighbors Hotline at: 703-957-9489 or send an email to: [neighbors@paragonhomecare.com](mailto:neighbors@paragonhomecare.com).

Finally, I wanted to touch on mental/emotional health management...with so much sad news and uncertainty bombarding us daily, it's understandable that the level of stress, anxiety, fear, and sadness is on the rise. So, I want to pass along some resources to help. Here are some **Common Signs of Distress**<sup>1</sup> to look out for:

- Feelings of numbness, disbelief, anxiety or fear.
- Changes in appetite, energy, and activity levels.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Difficulty sleeping or nightmares and upsetting thoughts and images.
- Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, and skin rashes.
- Worsening of chronic health problems.
- Anger or short temper.
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.

Some suggestions for coping include: getting plenty of rest/sleep; eating healthy/nutritious meals; taking time to breathe, stretch, meditate and/or pray; reducing exposure to news; and avoiding alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. Also, taking time to unwind, play, and connect with friends and loved ones. Here are some resources for direct assistance:

- US Dept of Health & Human Services Disaster Distress Hotline: 1-800-986-5990
- CrisisLink: 1-800-273-8255
- Fairfax County Spiritual Support Hotline: 703-324-5185

Thank you and continued best wishes for health and happiness to you and yours!

Juan Tuason  
President & CEO

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<sup>1</sup> [CDC -Taking Care of Your Emotional Health](#)



April 9, 2020

Dear Clients and Families:

As the COVID-19 crisis continues, we are doing everything we can to ensure we are following CDC and Virginia of Health protocols for keeping our clients and employees safe! To that end, we are ensuring that our employees have access to PPE's (face masks, gloves, hand sanitizers, etc). Due to global shortages, we are rationing them in short supplies, and asking employees to replenish supplies on a weekly basis.

In the meantime, we wanted to pass along some additional safety precautions you can take:

- ensure everyone in the home is washing hands often, especially when returning from public areas (e.g. grocery store),
- take temperatures of any visitors entering the home to ensure they do not have a fever,
- wear face masks/cloth covering when going out,
- disinfect surfaces (counters, tabletops, doorknobs, refrigerator handles, etc.) often,
- avoid close personal contact with others when possible.

Finally, as a result of the on-going social restrictions in place, we are concerned about the growing problem of **isolation**. To that end, we have allocated a portion of our budget to provide a community service by deploying our available employees to help with our Paragon Neighbors program that provides assistance with errands/shopping, making friendly visits or telephone check-ins, driving to critical appointments, and other concierge services. We are providing this free of charge, subject to budget and staffing availability. We will prioritize our clients, but also plan to offer more broadly to the communities that we serve. If you want more information or are in need of assistance, please contact our Neighbors Hotline at: 703-957-9489 or send an email to: [neighbors@paragonhomecare.com](mailto:neighbors@paragonhomecare.com).

Thank you and hoping that you and your family stay happy and healthy during this crisis!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Juan Tuason", with a long, flowing underline.

Juan Tuason  
President & CEO



March 30, 2020

Dear Clients and Families:

I am writing to provide an update to my last communication, regarding the on-going situation surrounding COVID-19. As a result of subsequent direction from Federal, State and local authorities, we are **suspending non-essential transportation services**. This is a measure we are taking to ensure your safety, the safety of our employees – and the community as a whole. Therefore, we ask that shopping and appointment travel be restricted and consolidated in order to minimize as much as possible. We've instructed our employees to contact us if they have questions or concerns about travel requests.

We also continue to over-communicate with our team to ensure that our infection control protocol is followed. As such, we have introduced two different online training programs for our team since mid-March that provide in-depth instruction on maximizing their safety and the safety of those they are caring for. We are rewarding our aides for completing these sessions – in order to maximize participation and dissemination.

We are also monitoring the CDC's [Information for Healthcare Professionals](#) on a daily basis to stay on top of the fast moving information – as the medical community and health officials learn more about the virus every day.

Finally, with regard to PPE (personal protection equipment) like masks, gloves and gowns: due to the global shortage, we are also experiencing long delays in new shipments and don't expect additional supplies until next week. Therefore, we are rationing our limited supply based on priority. Specifically, we are providing them to employees who are caring for clients who are sick (and possibly contagious) and those employees who are working in facilities/hospitals and high-rise condos, where risk of contamination is higher. We will make PPE's available to all employees who want them as soon as our supply is replenished.

Please don't hesitate to call us if you have questions or need anything else. I am including a copy of my last letter below, as it contains additional information that is still very relevant as a helpful reminder.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Juan Tuason".

Juan Tuason  
President/CEO



March 12, 2020

Dear Clients and Families:

Paragon Home Care is actively monitoring the progression of the coronavirus, COVID-19, to ensure that we have the most accurate and latest information on the threat of the virus. As you know, this situation continues to develop rapidly as new cases are identified in our communities and our protocols will be adjusted as needed.

While most cases of COVID-19 are mild, causing only fever and cough, a very small percentage of cases become severe and may progress particularly in the elderly and people with underlying medical conditions. Because this is the primary population that Paragon Home Care serves, we understand your concerns and want to share with you how our organization is responding to the threat of COVID-19.

We are following updates and procedures from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) State Department of Health, local and county authorities, the Home Care Association of America and other agencies and resources. Our response and plans may adjust according to the recommendations from these organizations.

- As a standard practice, we have an emergency preparedness plan in place. We will continue to follow it as this situation evolves or update it accordingly.
- All caregivers follow established protocol regarding staying home when sick. This practice is not new to our staff.
- Communication with caregivers to assess any known risk factors, such as travel to areas with widespread outbreaks or local contact in areas known to have reported cases are ongoing. We will advise them not to report to work if they are deemed high-risk.
- We believe that home remains the safest place for you or your loved one, as indications show that the virus is spread more quickly in facilities and larger group or public settings. Possible exposure will remain the lowest for those who are able to stay in their homes with limited outside contact. For this reason, we feel fortunate to be able to provide care that can keep people at home or limited exposure in group settings through personalized care and support.
- For clients we serve who reside in facilities or other group-type living situations, we will work closely with the facility on any protocols, exchange of information, or other guidelines as necessary.
- Many of our clients are especially at risk, given they are older adults or have underlying health issues. We are vigilant about our need to help protect these individuals from illness be it the flu, COVID-19, or any other communicable disease. These measures are not new to us as we seek to minimize risk regularly for our clients, regardless of an outbreak such as this new coronavirus.



### **Contingency Planning for You or Your Loved One**

- Depending on the severity of the spread of illness in communities or the response taken by national and state authorities (ex. mandatory isolation, closure of schools, etc.), our staffing levels may be affected. As a result, we may be unable to cover all shifts.
- We will make every effort possible to provide our clients with safe and appropriate care and seek to avoid canceling shifts, however, we cannot guarantee this will not occur given the uncertainties about this situation.
- At all times, regardless of a viral outbreak or other situation, we strongly recommend that our clients have alternative arrangements for the provisions of care in the event we are unable to provide services. We encourage you to begin considering and putting into place back-up plans now, as the severity of the spread of this illness and planned interventions is still uncertain.

### **What You Can Do to Protect Yourself and Your Family**

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces.
- Eat well, drink lots of water and get rest to strengthen your immune system.
- Have a family emergency preparedness plan that includes care coverage and back up support, if possible.
- Stay at home and away from others if you are feeling ill.
- If you have underlying medical issues that put you in the high-risk category, avoid large public gatherings or other places outside the home. Limit your contact with others.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me. I want to assure you that we are following all the necessary protocol to protect our clients and your loved one. I will continue to update you as more information becomes available.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Juan Tuason", written over a light blue circular scribble.

Juan Tuason  
President/CEO