

Updated 01/21/21

Dear Members of the Austen Riggs Community:

Late Wednesday night we received an alert through our COVID testing system that two patients and one staff member tested positive for the virus that causes COVID-19 from samples obtained Tuesday, January 19. None of the three currently has symptoms, but all have been placed in isolation in accordance with our COVID protocols and CDC guidance. One of the patients is in isolation at the Inn in the wing we consider our COVID infirmary, another is in her own residence and the staff member is at home and away from work. Additionally, we have notified all patients and staff of this development while our nursing team is conducting contact tracing to determine how many other patients or staff need to enter quarantine. The three people whose results were positive are currently being retested and will only exit isolation when they are medically cleared. Those in quarantine will also be tested as we follow them.

This kind of early detection, in conjunction with masks and social distancing, are the most effective ways to limit the spread of COVID-19. This is why the Austen Riggs Center launched our twice-a-week testing program for all patients and staff in November 2020. Under the distribution plan authorized by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the majority of Riggs patients and staff have now received the first dose of Moderna vaccine, with the second dose expected in mid-February. This will mark yet another major step in our efforts to protect patients and staff from the virus.

As additional updates become available, I will share them with you via this webpage.

Sincerely,

Eric M. Plakun, MD
Medical Director/CEO