**\*\*Sample Media Talking Points for Communities and Organizations\*\***

**\*\*Please Tailor as Needed and Distribute on Organization Letterhead\*\***

**MEDIA TALKING POINTS**

*Communication specific to coronavirus, caregiving and older adults is a dynamic situation. Information about how the novel coronavirus spreads and recommendations on preventative measures continues to emerge. Use the talking points below as a framework, and tailor as needed to your setting.*

[Insert as appropriate: residents/clients/staff memberss]’ WELL-BEING IS TOP PRIORITY: Ensuring older adults’ health and well-being is our top priority.

WE ARE CONCERNED AND PROACTIVE: [Insert your organization’s name] are concerned about the spread of the novel coronavirus. The people we serve are typically more vulnerable to the virus and the disease it causes, COVID-19. We are taking action.

INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL:

* [For SNFs] We have emergency preparedness and infection prevention and control plans in place. These provide detailed instructions for staff on how we address and manage infectious disease outbreaks.
* [Modify according to care setting and specific actions being taken] Our staff is trained in infection control practices and follows established protocols based on that training. We have experienced managing illness outbreaks, such as flu, and have a heightened awareness of the possible risk to our residents posed by viral illnesses, such as flu, norovirus, and COVID-19.
* [Modify according to setting and specific actions being taken] We have implemented daily cleaning processes at our community that are part of the emergency plan. [Note: *if no formal emergency plan is in place* but your organization is adhering to guidelines recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, use this: We are following [recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/prevent-spread-in-long-term-care-facilities.html) and from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in healthcare settings and communities serving older adults.

WE ARE INFORMED: Because the coronavirus is spreading quickly, our staff is in communication with public health officials [insert other organizations as appropriate] in our region to stay abreast of the latest developments about coronavirus. In addition, we are closely monitoring information from the [insert state department of health name] as well as those from federal agencies, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [CMS, if applicable] and the World Health Organization.

WE ARE TAKING ACTION: As we learn more about coronavirus and COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus, we are educating staff, residents, and families. Current protocols we’ve implemented include:

* For staff: teaching them about the symptoms of COVID-19 and monitoring residents for these symptoms; teaching staff about how the virus spreads and recommended containment actions, including staying home from work if they are symptomatic.
* For [insert as appropriate: residents and families, clients, patients]: how to recognize symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if they suspect that they or a loved one may be infected.
* [If appropriate] We are monitoring [insert: residents, clients] [insert: regularly, daily] for fever or respiratory symptoms, and taking appropriate action.
* We screen every person coming into the community (essential visitors only).
* For everyone: because older adults can be vulnerable to the spread of viral illnesses, including coronavirus, we are asking that everyone who comes in contact with our community members to be particularly vigilant and follow recommended guidance on prevention. Specifically:
  + Washing hands regularly and sufficiently.
  + Cleaning and wiping down frequently touched surfaces.
  + Limiting contact with others (social distancing).
  + Staying at home if they are feeling ill.
* IF POSITIVE DIAGNOSIS: We have notified public health officials as required and are following procedures recommended by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. We are taking every step as recommended by authorities to contain the spread. We want to make residents, their families, and our dedicated staff aware of this situation and reassure everyone that we are on top of it.
* IF COVID-19 DEATH: At this time, our focus is on ensuring the safety and well-being of our [residents/clients/staff members] and we are following protocols identified by CMS and CDC to ensure their safety and well-being. We are communicating all updates to our [residents/clients/staff members] through a multitude of internal communication channels. We will be providing on-going updates via our webpage and social media channels for families, media, and the greater community.

WE ARE AVAILABLE: A fast-changing, potential crisis situation such as this demands consistent communication. We are committed to providing you with information, updated regularly. You can [insert your communication channel here] for the latest from our community leaders.