



Letters to the Editor

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Editor, Editorial Page
The Wall Street Journal
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The article that appeared in The Wall Street Journal <https://www.wsj.com/articles/assisted-living-facilities-are-vulnerable-to-coronavirus-11586084400?mod=searchresults&page=1&pos=1> (Assisted Living Facilities are Vulnerable to Coronavirus) (April 5, 2020) mistakenly takes a position opposite of the fact that assisted living residences are as well prepared as other settings to combat the presence of COVID-19 virus.

With the emergence of COVID-19, assisted living providers have carefully followed the specific recommendations provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and have overwhelmingly gone beyond this guidance to implement safe containment plans that protect both residents and staff. Assisted living has and continues to work cooperatively with the various agencies that are helping us navigate this pandemic, including the CDC, state departments of health, and other agencies that provide quality oversight of assisted living.

Across our memberships, residences are actively monitoring and screening all visitors and staff to minimize the likelihood that someone with the virus gains entry. We have also implemented enhanced disinfection protocols and are doing everything within our power to procure supplies such as disposable and washable personal protective equipment (PPE), approved cleaning agents as specified by the CDC, disposable dishware, and testing kits to allow us to identify and quickly isolate those who are infected with the virus. Unfortunately, it has been virtually impossible for assisted living providers to access fast-acting testing kits because we have not been prioritized for these life-saving tools.

As with most every other operator across myriad industries, if assisted living had access to quick-acting testing kits and PPE, we could further protect our vulnerable population and continue to keep most of our residents out of the hospital, allowing our health care system to focus on those with life threatening conditions. The fact of the matter is that assisted living residents are much safer living in our communities than they would be living by themselves with the physical and cognitive impairments that characterize most of those we care for.

While COVID-19 is present everywhere, those working on the front lines of assisted living are dedicated to being part of the solution to this crisis.

Most sincerely,

James Balda
President and CEO
Argentum

David S. Schless
President and CEO
American Seniors Housing
Association