



Montgomery Place

FROM 
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SUBJ MONTGOMERY PLACE MEASURES PROGRESS
ONE MOLEHILL AT A TIME DURING THIS TIME OF COVID-19

We've heard the idiom, making a "mountain out of a molehill," an overreaction to an otherwise minor issue. But when it comes to COVID-19, we should make "molehills out of the mountain." COVID-19 is a behemoth, rapidly increasing its power. We should not underestimate its impact or consider any aspect of this danger a minor issue. Our challenge is how to stop its eruption and contain it. Let's break this massive threat into molehills and work at leveling them.

I have read many reports, and I'm sure you have too, that promote social distancing. And this precaution seems to be one of those "molehills" we are, as a society, adopting fairly well. Another is treatment. Hospitals are winning the battle for many individuals. I read today about a New York hospital celebrating its 1,000th recovered patient as he went home. Next, we need to tackle testing. In this case, as a country, we may not be doing such a good job. Some areas do open testing to everyone, but most still require COVID-19 symptoms. With this approach, I'm sorry to say, it is three days too late to administer a test.

On Thursday evening, the Illinois Department of Public Health did agree to provide testing for all asymptomatic healthcare workers—a milestone for Chicagoans and our neighbors! How can we track and stop this virus if we do not know who is carrying it? Testing all healthcare workers will help us conduct more effective contact tracing. When someone tests positive, we can then look at their points of contact. This way we can better identify individuals who may be carriers. Those carriers, then, can immediately start isolation.

We should set our sights on better managing isolation, the next "molehill" to conquer to improve containment of the virus. If you or anyone you know was not wearing full-droplet protocol isolation gear when in contact with someone diagnosed with an active case of COVID-19, it is imperative to isolate for 14 days.

Isolation is different from "stay at home" because it does not allow for exceptions such as going out for a walk or shopping for food. To underscore, isolation means "do not leave your home for any reason."

Here is the challenge. Without a support system for food and medicine delivery, daycare assistance and financial support, among other basic needs, people are

challenged to sustain total isolation for 14 days. As a city, county, state and nation, we are not in a position to support and enforce isolation orders. But these very isolation orders are one of the most important solutions to help us defeat this growing mountain of this new strain of Coronavirus. At Montgomery Place, we provide delivery systems that make it possible for our residents to properly isolate. They are doing a great job with flattening that portion of the COVID-19 mountain! But is everyone else?

The most far-reaching way to defeat COVID-19 is vaccination. Unfortunately, we most likely are a long way away from surmounting this challenge.

So let's do what we can—continue to achieve some meaningful victories—with social distancing, testing and treating as prescribed. And now, let's engage in exploring how to improve our contact tracing and isolation solutions, including how we can support others when isolation is required. With this ambitious agenda, we will leave the challenges of developing a vaccine to the scientists.

Here is a 14-day progress report about how Montgomery Place is faring so far. There are no new cases for residents since April 17, and one staff member from the COVID-19 unit tested positive on April 22. We trace and monitor contacts and alert those who should isolate.

<i>Status</i>	<i>Residents</i>	<i>Staff</i>
Cases recovered	7	5
Cases hospitalized	0	1
At home recovery in process	3	3
Recovering in skilled nursing care	3	0
Deaths	1	0
Total cases reported	14	9

NOTE: To protect residents' privacy, we do not announce publicly floor locations of individuals recovering in their home here. All who are recovering observe strict isolation guidelines. They do not have any contact with other residents, especially those in nearby apartments, and never go into hallways to ensure no risk for their neighbors. Staff, who provide services and support, use droplet-isolation precautions.

While we are embarking on another weekend, know that I am available if you'd like to talk. Just call my mobile phone number, 773-617-1317, at any time.

Surmounting this challenge of a lifetime, requires a united front.