Knowing that HUD-assisted senior living communities are vulnerable during the COVID 19 outbreak, LeadingAge Maryland focused the Housing Happenings call on the virus. More than 170 people attended the call. Questions and comments will be forwarded to LeadingAge and to HUD as needed.

Juliana Bilowich- LeadingAge

- HUD has been limited in its guidance so far. LeadingAge has sent HUD questions from members and an update is expected today.
- REAC inspections are postponed until further notice as are MORs – but HUD will provide more guidance in the near future.
- Staff in the HUD Multifamily housing office has been responsive, and LeadingAge has additional requests for HUD including:
  - Relieving administrative burdens, streamlining renewals, providing more online processes, etc.
  - Additional guidance is needed regarding visitors and staffing
- Today at 2:30pm the HUD Multifamily office is beginning a weekly check in call for stakeholders. Call in numbers are on LeadingAge and HUD websites
- Infection prevention and control – HUD will not issue separate guidance but points to the CDC’s guidance re: community and congregate settings which is fairly detailed.
- HUD has visitor guidance for housing providers and it is posted on the LeadingAge COVID website. Buildings can set their own visitor policies, but can’t violate Fair Housing laws and also older adults still need to be able to access services from the community.
- Asking HUD to suspend annual inspections and also for PPE, cleaning supplies, etc.

Tiffany Nicolette – CHAI

- Service coordinators are calling each of the residents as a security check regarding things like whether folks have 14 day supplies of medicine; necessary groceries and supplies; how are they feeling, etc.
- They are trying to limit visitors and gatherings via signage and posters. Asking any visitors to go straight to the apartment they are visiting; no gathering; trying to limit visitors to those which are essential
- Eating Together program has stopped communal dining and residents just pick up food and return to their apartments to eat.
- CHAI is providing service coordinators with some ways to help residents stay engaged and connected - crossword puzzles, other resources which will be shared.
Brandon Moss – CSI Support and Development
- Properties are managed as a Co-op so residents manage the buildings
- CSI has been proactive in trying to flatten the curve:
  - Cancelled meetings, inspections, reduced office hours on site
  - Focusing work orders on emergencies
  - Service coordinators are working from home
  - Maintaining social distance
  - Have communicated to residents and visitors – limit visitation, do self-checks, stay out of common areas
  - People seem to be following CDC guidance
  - Have extended additional sick leave for staff

Pam Monroe – National Church Residences
- Headquartered in Ohio and Ohio Governor has taken a firm stand closing down many settings
- National Church Residences have implemented an infection prevention plan:
  - Started off at Level One - Universal precautions, hand washing, screening for exposure, self-quarantine
  - As of today they are at Level Four:
    - If one of the residents has the virus – have one property in NJ that has a resident who is positive
    - Restricting visitors on honor system unless visitor is considered an essential visitor such as critical repairs, clergy, mental health workers, hospice, government agency, home health, etc.
    - Limiting group settings to 10
    - Self-quarantine if people feel unwell or have been exposed
    - Have closed community rooms and have asked staff to conduct business in community room rather than small offices
    - Sent out notices to staff members and residents regarding the virus
    - In their NJ property which has a confirmed case of COVID 19 they convened a conference call with residents to explain next steps; challenging with four different languages spoken
    - Screening employees and critical vendors on a daily basis via questionnaire – and not allowing entry if problematic
    - Biggest issue is trying to find supplies – PPE, cleaning supplies, etc.
    - Requesting that HUD not invoke all of the provisions of Chapter 38
    - If HUD does suspend annual re-certifications need to make sure subsidies are not taken away
    - In Puerto Rico they need HUD to speak up that older adult housing needs to remain open

Questions and Answers
Note - This is a compilation of questions and responses from the call. These responses are “best guesses” from folks on the ground who are trying to figure things out as they go along and should not be taken as
guidance. LeadingAge Maryland received many questions and comments not able to be addressed on the call and will compile them and send to LeadingAge and HUD.

- Unit turnover and leasing – are you still letting new folks move in?
  - Working on virtual tours rather than having people tour
  - Still doing unit turns because housing is such a need, but are being cautious about the process and doing as much virtual as possible

- How to protect staff – meals, protective equipment, entering apartments to check on people who are feeling ill, assistance with things like faxing?
  - One organization found a source for gloves and are encouraging social distancing – 6 feet apart; have gone to box meals; telling service coordinators to try to do their work over the phone; asking staff to exercise caution when in apartments for work orders; etc.
  - It is likely that HUD will be issuing guidance today about what staff can ask about resident health status before going into apartments

- How to deal with residents who are not cooperating with guidance?
  - There is no “hammer” – cannot threaten to evict or take harsh action, just appeal to their good sense
  - Concern re: family members who are not essential visitors and families who are dropping kids off to stay with grandma while school is out.

- Questions and suggestions regarding how HUD could be helpful:
  - Senior centers in some places are still open – could they all be closed?
  - USDA Rural Development – LeadingAge is in touch with them with whole list of questions and has a call with them this afternoon
  - Re-certifications- LeadingAge is expecting more guidance from HUD, in the meantime staff should avoid the in-person components to delay for up to 90 days due to COVID 19 as an extenuating circumstance

- What about the resident hot line National Church Residences has set up? What are they learning?
  - Newly set up
  - Will have a medical professional staffing the line
  - Don’t yet know the types of questions/ comments people will have
  - Also have an email address for residents to submit questions
  - They are compiling daily Q & A documents that they are sending out to the field

- AARP Foundation was on the call and asks what sorts of resources might be helpful in working on the emotional consequences of social isolation – LeadingAge Maryland will work with them and others to compile.

- If there is a confirmed case at a property what is the guidance?
  - Juliana spoke with HUD about this and they are going to defer to local health departments.
  - There are questions re: health information privacy – does a resident have to report a positive test to building? Does health department? Do residents in a building with a confirmed case have to be notified – general sense is yes, but question of whether to name the individual is not clear.