

ACAP UPDATE 04-09-2021

Dear ACAP Community,

We have been so happy to hear from many virtual members and members on hold about their plans to return to ACAP in these next months. As noted in our previous Community Letter, we are working hard to onboard returning members as quickly, yet safely, as possible. The Board of Directors and Executive Director are working on an action plan to guide us through 2021, with staff input.

The increase in the number of onsite members necessitates a program change. ACAP will need to reduce our virtual offerings in order to free up staff to serve members onsite. **Effective on May 3, ACAP will be offering only one virtual class in each time slot daily.** ACAP will be offering the class that currently has more participation. ACAP members who are taking the virtual class to be eliminated are welcome to join the other virtual class.

As we mentioned previously, program changes may be needed through these next months as we adjust to the increasing numbers onsite. We dislike making changes to our schedule in the middle of a session, but our priority needs to be serving the members who are onsite with us.

ACAP is about being together in the community. As COVID recedes and community opportunities increase, ACAP will be returning to our previous program model. Central to our mission are the activities of gathering together to learn, explore, express ourselves, give back, and grow. We do this best when we are face-to-face, and we look forward to the day when we can be together without having COVID determine all of our interactions.

We are proud of the virtual program we created. It has helped us stay connected with our members while sheltering at home because of a world-wide pandemic. We have seen its value for the disabilities community, and we believe that it should be an ongoing option for some people. However, ACAP's virtual program has not achieved sustainability, and ACAP must invest our resources into sustainable programs.

If you are currently a virtual-only member or not in programming at all, and you have not already contacted Sandra, please let the director know about your intentions to return onsite to ACAP at: sandra@acap-waukesha.org. We already have a waiting list of new members who wish to be at ACAP. If we do not hear from you, we cannot guarantee you a space at ACAP when you are ready to return. Please communicate to Sandra directly rather than through your ACAP coordinator, in order to streamline this process. **Please note:** we have filled our slots for returning members in April, May, and June and are scheduling into July.

Allergy Season and COVID-19

Some of us know spring is here by our sneezy noses, itchy eyes, and other allergy symptoms. ACAP urges attention to the fact that allergies share some symptoms with COVID-19. If you are an allergy-sufferer and are feeling symptomatic, please take extra precautions in the interests of safety. Here is some information to help guide you: <https://www.emersonhospital.org/articles/allergies-or-covid-19>.

Safety at ACAP

As of this writing, ACAP is proud to say that we have not experienced a COVID outbreak at ACAP since we re-opened onsite in July. Our stringent observance of safety precautions has protected us, and we will continue with these safety measures for the foreseeable future. This means that, even with vaccinations, all members onsite at ACAP must wear masks or shields at all times, have temperature checks before entering the building, wash/sanitize their hands regularly, stay 6 feet apart from each other while in programming, and stay home when sick.

Member Vaccinations

As noted in our last community letter, ACAP **strongly encourages** all members to seek and get COVID vaccinations. This is important because studies show an 85-94% or higher protective efficacy with the current vaccinations available (Pfizer, Moderna, and J&J). This means that 85-94% of people who acquire the virus will be protected from serious and life-threatening illness due to COVID-19.ⁱ

Other reasons to get the vaccine include:

- Creating an environment of safety at ACAP.
 - ACAP serves many people with vulnerable health. An environment where most people have been vaccinated will make the likelihood of transmission at ACAP very low.
- Preventing the spread of the virus to others.
 - The vaccination clearly protects the person getting it, but because of the way COVID spreads, having more people vaccinated also protects people who don't get vaccinated:

[How vaccines protect others](#)

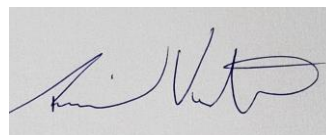
We encourage anyone with concerns about the vaccine to seek guidance from a medical professional or to learn more from the Centers for Disease Control:

[Benefits of getting a COVID vaccination](#); [6 things to know about COVID vaccinations](#); [Vaccine facts](#)

Sincerely,



Sandra Gines, Executive Director



Rick Verthein, President, Board of Directors

ⁱ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/janssen.html>