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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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# Almost there

## Mercy Home very close to officially coming out of outbreak mode

**EAGLE LAKE, Maine (Jan. 22, 2021)** – Mercy Home Administrator Denise Raymond was able to share some good news with her team yesterday evening: The nursing care and residential facility is very close to receiving official confirmation that it has contained its COVID-19 outbreak.

“Now that we have 14 days behind us without any new COVID-19 cases, we could technically be out of outbreak mode today,” Raymond said this morning. “However, the CDC Epidemiologist asked that we have another swab clinic today to have one last confirmation that we have no new positive cases.”

The clinic started at 7:30 a.m.

A change in status would allow for more social interaction between those residents who have completed their required isolation period and/or have recovered. The nursing care facility still has four (4) nursing residents and two (2) employees with confirmed, active COVID-19, a marked improvement since mid-December when Aroostook County entered its “high” categorization for Positivity Rate of the novel coronavirus, indicating high community spread.

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Five residents passed away during Mercy Home's outbreak. The facility is not alone. Others in Aroostook County, in Maine, and in the United States have lost residents, most of them elderly or otherwise immune-compromised. Risk for serious illness or death increases with age.

"We extend our sincere condolences to the families and friends of our five residents who have passed away," said Northern Maine General CEO Michelle Raymond, echoing similar sentiments made by Denise Raymond.

Mercy Home is following all guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. All measures to keep residents and employees as safe as possible from the deadly virus continue at Mercy Home and at all NMG homes and offices.

St. John Valley Pharmacy will return to Mercy Home on Monday to administer the second part of the two-part vaccine for COVID-19. At the same time, additional agency front-liners – some of them now working from home - will be able to receive their first shot.

Northern Maine General leadership, administrators and managers continue to advocate to their employees, clients, and the larger community the importance of vaccinations, distancing, wearing face coverings, washing hands frequently, and limiting trips to locations where people gather *en masse*.

Virtual visits to Mercy Home are encouraged: Please call 444-5152 and ask for Ext. 206 (that extension is manned from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday).

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*Northern Maine General is a nonprofit social services organization serving Aroostook County, with business offices in Eagle Lake and Caribou. Founded in 1907, NMG provides long-term care, rehabilitation, home and community supports, behavioral health services, case management, and consultation services and resources. Contracted services include subsidized apartments.*