

# Nursing assistant at Brockton nursing home dies of coronavirus

By [Laura Crimaldi](#) Globe Staff, Updated April 25, 2020, 6:07 p.m.







Kettely Desire, a CNA from Alliance at West Acres in Brockton who died of coronavirus.

Kettely Desire had plans.

Her granddaughter was scheduled to graduate from high school in Miami in June and Desire was organizing a celebration to honor her. In December, Desire would turn 65 years old and retirement was in her future, said her son, Frantz.

But on April 11, she died at Good Samaritan Medical Samaritan Center in Brockton after coming down with COVID-19. She had been working part time as a certified nursing assistant at Alliance at West Acres, a Brockton nursing home, which had experienced a deadly outbreak of the virus.

“She did a double shifts for a day or two. After that her body was getting sick,” Frantz Desire said Saturday by phone from Miami.

In a statement, the facility said its workers are never required to work double shifts, but they can volunteer to work extra time. “Their hard work and sacrifice is deeply appreciated,” the statement said.

Desire died the same day as [Maria Krier](#), 59, a licensed practical nurse at Life Care Center of Nashoba Valley who had publicly criticized the facility over its handling of the COVID-19 outbreak. On Friday, the Littleton nursing home said 16

patients have died of the virus and 21 were still ill. Fifty-seven employees were out sick and 17 have tested positive for COVID-19, the facility said.

Alliance Health and Human Services, the nonprofit in Southborough that runs Alliance at West Acres, announced Desire's death in an e-mail to families on Wednesday. Twenty-three staff members at the facility have tested positive for COVID-19 and 22 patients have died, according to the e-mail.

Desire had worked the day shift there since 2018 and completed her final shift in March, the e-mail said. A memorial honoring Desire will be created at the facility, the e-mail said. The nursing home officials do not know where or how Desire was exposed to the virus, according to a spokeswoman.

The novel coronavirus has disproportionately impacted long-term care facilities statewide. As of Saturday, the virus had killed 1,530 patients in Massachusetts long-term care facilities, or 56percent of the state's 2,730 virus-related fatalities.

The state said 9,714 long-term care patients and workers were infected and 299 facilities had reported at least one case of the virus. There are 139 assisted-living facilities in Massachusetts with two or more cases of COVID-19, the state said.

In Belmont, the administrator at Belmont Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Center announced Friday that a total of [49 patients have died from COVID-19.](#)

Another 67 patients and 73 employees there had tested positive, according to the administrator Stewart Karger.

In a statement issued Saturday, Karger said the facility appreciates the help it has received from state and local officials who have aided with COVID-19 testing and securing personal protective equipment.

Belmont Manor hasn't accepted new patients during the past several weeks, which has lowered staffing demands, he said.

Ellin Reisner of Somerville said her husband, George H. Berry, died at the facility on April 13 after testing positive for COVID-19. She said she had a Skype call with Berry about two hours before he died. He was a retired college professor who established the computer science department at Wentworth Institute of Technology.

Reisner described Belmont Manor as a good nursing home with kind staff, including some workers who had been employed there for years.

"It's just a tragedy," she said. "I'm heartbroken that this happened to my husband. I also feel heartbroken for those people. They were very dedicated people."

Nursing home workers, Reisner said, must be given paid sick leave and earn higher wages so they don't have to string together multiple jobs to make ends meet.

"What we have done up to now is not sufficient," she said. "We have to really rethink this."

The state has assigned a public health epidemiologist to Belmont Manor and made six deliveries of personal protective equipment to the facility, a spokesman said Saturday. The nursing home got staffing help through an agency associated with COVID-19 Response Command Center, the spokesman said.

At AdviniaCare at Wilmington, 36 patients had died as of Thursday, according to a Facebook post published by the Wilmington Board of Health. Forty-seven patients have recovered and 22 were still sick, said the post, which also

announced that the town planned to stop providing updates from the facility because it was accepting patients who are recovering from hospitalizations for COVID-19 and don't live in Wilmington.

David Ball, a spokesman for the facility's parent company, Pointe Group Care LLC, said Saturday that the town's number appeared out of date, but he couldn't provide updated figures because workers were busy caring for patients.

Pointe Group Care initially had offered to convert AdviniaCare at Wilmington into a recovery center for COVID-19 patients, but those plans were scaled back after [51 of its 98 patients tested positive for the virus](#) while asymptomatic. The facility, however, has opened an isolated unit for patients recovering from the virus.

Frantz Desire said Kettely Desire was hospitalized in Brockton on March 30 or April 1, and she learned she had COVID-19 a few days later. He said he spoke by phone with her during the first four days of her hospitalization, but then she was placed on a ventilator.

"That's when I couldn't talk to her anymore," he said. "That's when she went silent."

Her death certificate lists her cause of death as acute respiratory distress syndrome as a result of pneumonia caused by COVID-19.

Frantz Desire shared photographs from his mother's funeral in Florida, where she was entombed in a mausoleum. Desire, who was born in Haiti, regularly shared videos on her Facebook page from a Catholic church in Brockton, Christ the King.

Photographs from the funeral show mourners kneeling in front of a wall crypt and pushing a glass hearse.

The most recent post on her Facebook page was published March 26: a video of a woman blowing kisses that turn into hearts as Whitney Houston's rendition of "I Will Always Love You" plays.

"Tell someone you love them today. Because tomorrow is not promised," reads the text on top of the video. "To my family and friends, I LOVE YOU!"

*Matt Rocheleau of the Globe staff contributed to this report.*

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