

State Partnerships to Support COVID-19 Prevention and Response in Nursing Homes

2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

June 30, 2020

Introduction and Welcome



Traci Archibald

iQIIG, Director

Division of Community and Population Health
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Agenda



Our topics for today include:

- HAI/AR prevention program COVID-19 response activities and resources for nursing homes
- QIO Program COVID-19 prevention activities and resources for nursing homes
- Opportunities for coordination and partnership (examples could include provider outreach, Tele-ICAR activities and NHSN support)



Joseph F. Perz, DrPH MA

Deputy Chief, Public Health Programs,
Prevention and Response Branch

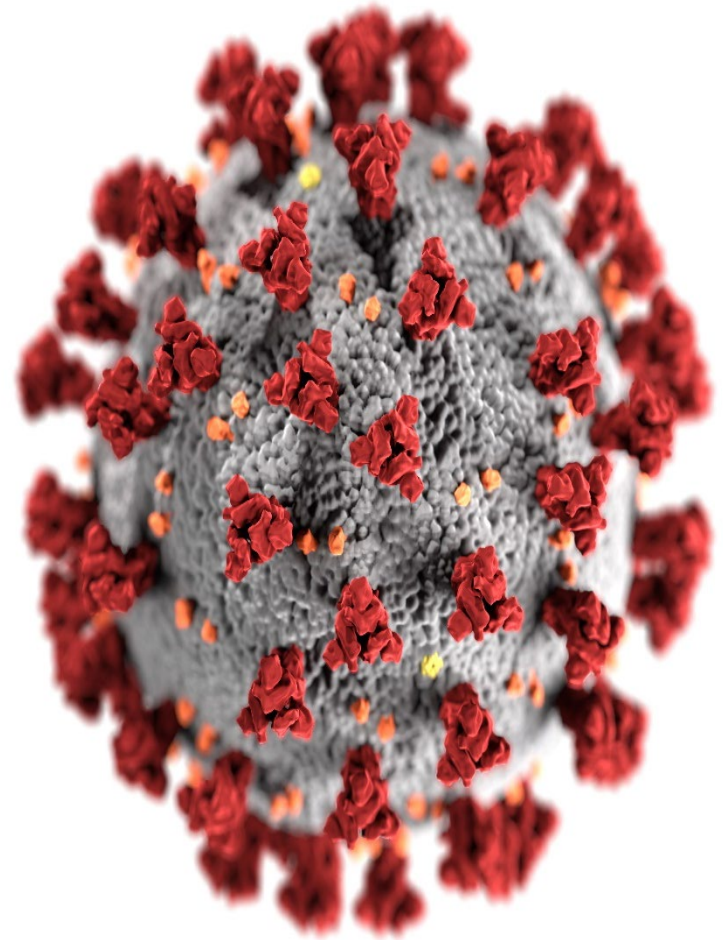
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



CDC and HAI/AR prevention program COVID-19 response activities and resources for nursing homes

Joe Perz, DrPH

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



For more information: www.cdc.gov/COVID19



CDC and our Health Department partners thank frontline Nursing Home Staff and Administrators across the US

CDC thanks our State/Local Health Department and other partners for supporting Nursing Homes

Public Health Approach:

- Prevention
- Surveillance
- Response



Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Preparing for COVID-19 in Nursing Homes

Updated June 25, 2020

[Print Page](#)

Summary of Changes to the Guidance:

- Tiered recommendations to address nursing homes in different phases of COVID-19 response
- Added a recommendation to assign an individual to manage the facility's infection control program
- Added guidance about new requirements for nursing homes to report to the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN)
- Added a recommendation to create a plan for testing residents and healthcare personnel for SARS-CoV-2

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html>

PREVENTION

Mini Webinar Series — COVID-19 Prevention Training for Long-Term Care Staff



Sparkling Surfaces (7 min) - <https://bit.ly/2yulKj2>

- Keep long-term care and nursing home residents healthy by knowing how and when to clean and disinfect environmental and equipment surfaces.



Clean Hands (7 min) - <https://bit.ly/35JzNgH>

- Keep long-term care and nursing home residents healthy by knowing how and when to perform hand hygiene as part of preventing the spread of COVID-19.



Closely Monitor Residents (7 min) - <https://bit.ly/3bhodKI>

- Learn the importance of recognizing new or worsening infections quickly in long-term care facilities and nursing homes. The earlier sick residents can be identified, the faster COVID-19 can be prevented from spreading throughout the facility.



Keep COVID-19 Out! (6 min) - <https://bit.ly/2SLKzhe>

- Learn what staff, vendors, and consultants should do to protect residents and keep COVID-19 out of the facility. Understand the importance of wearing facemasks and cloth face coverings appropriately.



PPE Lessons (12 min) - <https://bit.ly/2zn9yjQ>

- Learn what personal protective equipment (PPE) should be used in long-term care facilities and nursing homes as well as when and how to use PPE correctly to help protect yourself and residents from COVID-19.

- Access the complete series on the COVID-19 Long-term Care webpage: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html>
- You can also watch the videos on CDC's YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/CDCStreamingHealth>



SURVEILLANCE

The screenshot shows the NHSN website interface. The breadcrumb trail is: CDC > NHSN > Materials for Enrolled Facilities > Long-term Care Facilities. The left sidebar contains a navigation menu with items like NHSN Login, About NHSN, Enroll Here, Change NHSN Facility Administrator, and Materials for Enrolled Facilities. Under 'Materials for Enrolled Facilities', the 'COVID-19 Module' is selected. The main content area is titled 'LTCF COVID-19 Module' and features a yellow alert box with an exclamation mark icon. The alert text states: 'NHSN has received an unprecedented number of inquiries since the release of the new COVID-19 Module and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid's (CMS) new requirements for nursing home reporting. We are making every effort to respond to every question in the shortest timeframe possible, but given the surge in volume, we strongly recommend reviewing the webpage materials here before sending questions to the NHSN helpdesk.' Below the alert are two links: 'New! CMS COVID-19 Reporting Requirements for Nursing Homes. [PDF - 200 KB]' and 'New! FAQs about COVID-19 Data Published by CMS. [PDF - 200 KB]'. The main text explains that CDC's NHSN provides healthcare facilities, such as long-term care facilities (LTCF), with a customized system to track infections and prevention process measures. It states that tracking this information allows facilities to identify problems, improve care, and determine progress toward facility and national healthcare-associated infection goals. A diagram shows the 'COVID-19 Module for LTCF' supported by four pathways: Resident Impact & Facility Capacity, Staff & Personnel Impact, Supplies & Personal Protective Equipment, and Ventilator Capacity & Supplies. The text further explains that the module supports the nation's COVID-19 response by introducing a new COVID-19 Module for Long Term Care Facilities, which includes nursing homes/skilled nursing, long-term care for the developmentally disabled, and assisted living facilities. The COVID-19 Module for LTCFs consists of four pathways within NHSN's Long-term Care Facility Component: Resident Impact and Facility Capacity, Staff and Personnel Impact, Supplies and Personal Protective Equipment, and Ventilator Capacity and Supplies. The module enables an assessment of the impact of COVID-19 in LTCFs through facility reported information, including: 1) counts of residents and facility personnel with suspected and laboratory positive COVID-19; 2) counts of suspected and laboratory positive COVID-19 related deaths among residents and facility personnel; 3) staffing shortages; 3) status of personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies; and 4) ventilator capacity and supplies for facilities with ventilator dependent units. The module does not collect staff or resident-level information. Participation in the COVID-19 Module for LTCFs requires facilities to be actively enrolled in NHSN. LTCFs that are currently

<https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/ltc/covid19/index.html>



SURVEILLANCE → Data for Action

Health Department Notifications for COVID-19

- Engage public health as soon as a single COVID-19 case is identified or a cluster of illness is noticed (≥ 3 residents or HCP with new-onset respiratory symptoms)
- Residents, families and staff should be made aware of COVID cases
 - Should be part of the facility's communication plan

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
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Baltimore, Maryland 21244-1850



Center for Clinical Standards and Quality/Quality, Safety & Oversight Group

Ref: QSO-20-26-NH

DATE: April 19, 2020
TO: State Survey Agency Directors
FROM: Director
Quality, Safety & Oversight Group
SUBJECT: Upcoming Requirements for Notification of Confirmed COVID-19 (or COVID-19 Persons under Investigation) Among Residents and Staff in Nursing Homes

Memorandum Summary

- *CMS is committed* to taking critical steps to ensure America's health care facilities are prepared to respond to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Public Health Emergency (PHE).
- *Communicable Disease Reporting Requirements:* To ensure appropriate tracking, response, and mitigation of COVID-19 in nursing homes, CMS is reinforcing an existing requirement that nursing homes must report communicable diseases, healthcare-associated infections, and potential outbreaks to State and Local health departments. In rulemaking that will follow, CMS is requiring facilities to report this data to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in a standardized format and frequency defined by CMS and CDC. Failure to report cases of residents or staff who have confirmed COVID-19 and Persons under Investigation (PU) could result in an enforcement action. This memorandum summarizes new requirements which will be put in place very soon.
- *Transparency:* CMS will also be previewing a new requirement for facilities to notify residents' and their representatives to keep them up to date on the conditions inside the facility, such as when new cases of COVID-19 occur.



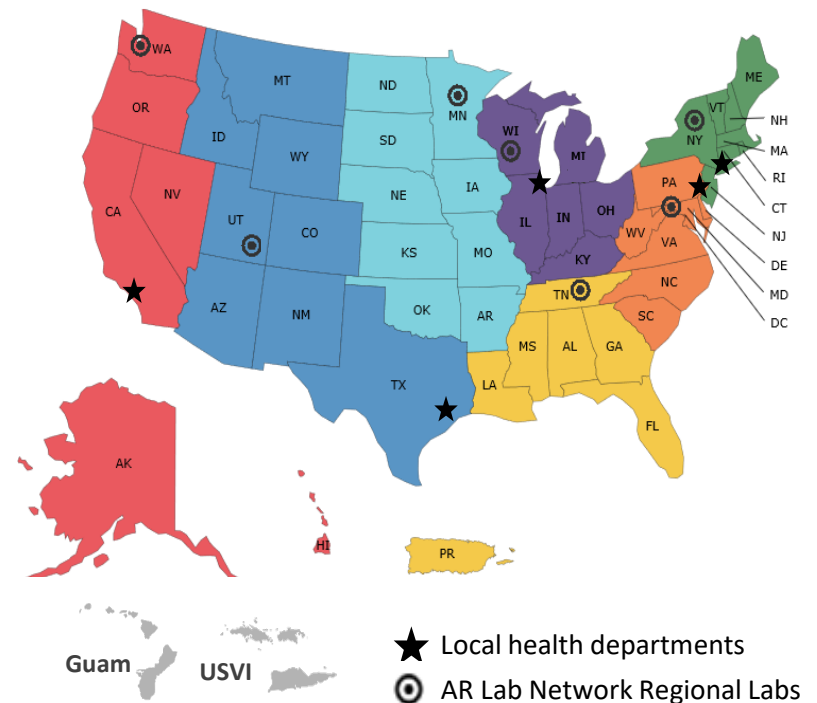
RESPONSE

The screenshot shows the CDC website page for 'Responding to Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Nursing Homes'. The page is part of a series of resources for healthcare professionals, specifically focusing on infection control in nursing homes and long-term care facilities. The left sidebar contains a navigation menu with categories such as Symptoms, Testing, Prevent Getting Sick, If You Are Sick, Daily Life & Coping, People Who Need Extra Precautions, Pets & Other Animals, Travel, Frequently Asked Questions, Cases, Data & Surveillance, Communities, Schools & Workplaces, and Healthcare Professionals. The main content area features the title 'Responding to Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Nursing Homes' and a subtitle 'Considerations for the Public Health Response to COVID-19 in Nursing Homes'. Below the title is a 'Print Page' link and a 'Related Pages' section with links to 'Performing Facility-wide SARS-CoV-2 Testing in Nursing Homes', 'Considerations for Memory Care Units in Long-term Care Facilities', and 'Key Strategies for Long-term Care Facilities'. The 'Background' section explains that the guidance is intended to assist nursing homes and public health authorities with response and cohorting decisions. It references the 'Interim Additional Guidance for Infection Prevention and Control for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 in Nursing Homes' and lists three situations that should prompt further investigation and testing for SARS-CoV-2: a resident or HCP with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, a resident with severe respiratory infection resulting in hospitalization or death, or at least three residents or HCP with new-onset respiratory symptoms within 72 hours of each other. The page also includes a 'Resident Cohorting' section with a subtitle 'Considerations for establishing a designated COVID-19 care unit for residents with confirmed'.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/nursing-homes-responding.html>

Healthcare-Associated Infections & Antibiotic Resistance (HAI/AR) Programs in Health Departments

- CDC-funded HAI/AR Programs are in 50 states, 5 large cities, DC, 3 territories
 - Surveillance, outbreak response, and containment
 - Partnerships and complementary activities with quality improvement organizations (CMS)
 - Data-driven prevention projects, including use of NHSN data for action
 - Infection prevention and control assessments across healthcare settings
 - Focused specialization in nursing homes



Infection Control Assessment and Response (ICAR)

- **Standardized assessment tools** for multiple different healthcare settings: acute care hospitals, nursing homes, outpatient
- Historically done in person
 - Assess infection prevention practices
 - **Guide quality improvement activities**
 - Foster a relationship between healthcare facilities and HAI programs
- CDC developed an **ICAR tool specific for nursing homes and COVID-19**, and structured with prompts to facilitate assessment by phone and video chat – called tele-ICAR

Infection Prevention and Control Assessment Tool for Nursing Homes Preparing for COVID-19

This is an infection control assessment and response tool (ICAR) that can be used to help nursing homes prepare for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). This tool may also contain content relevant for assisted living facilities.

The items assessed support the key strategies of:

- Keeping COVID-19 out of the facility
- Identifying infections as early as possible
- Preventing spread of COVID-19 in the facility
- Assessing and optimizing personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies
- Identifying and managing severe illness in residents with COVID-19

The areas assessed include:

- Visitor restriction
- Education, monitoring, and screening of healthcare personnel (HCP)
- Education, monitoring, and screening of residents
- Ensuring availability of PPE and other supplies
- Ensuring adherence to recommended infection prevention and control (IPC) practices
- Communicating with the health department and other healthcare facilities

Findings from the assessment can be used to target specific IPC preparedness activities that nursing homes can immediately focus on while continuing to keep their residents and HCP safe.

Additional Information for Personnel Conducting Assessments:

- The assessment includes a combination of staff interviews and direct observation of practices in the facility and can be conducted in-person or remotely (e.g., Tele-ICAR via phone or video conferencing). Provide a copy of the tool to the facility before completing the Tele-ICAR and encourage nursing home staff to take their own notes as you conduct the assessment.
- Background information in the light green boxes above each section being assessed provides context for the ICAR user. You should not read this aloud during the assessment process but can refer to it as additional information.
- Keep in mind that the goal of the assessment is to convey key messages to nursing homes and identify their COVID-19-specific preparedness needs. Note any IPC questions and concerns and address them after the ICAR is completed. If you need additional support and technical assistance during an assessment, know that you can engage state HD healthcare-associated infections/antibiotic resistance (HAI/AR) Program leads for support.
- Assessment activities provide an opportunity for dialogue and information sharing.
 - ▶ Discuss the purpose of the assessment. Emphasize that it is not a regulatory inspection and is designed to ensure the facility is prepared to quickly identify and prevent the spread of COVID-19.
 - ▶ Promote discussion by asking additional questions to prompt or probe. Use this opportunity to address concerns and offer available resources.

¹Health care personnel (HCP) are defined as paid and unpaid persons serving in health care settings who have the potential for direct or indirect exposure to patients or infectious materials



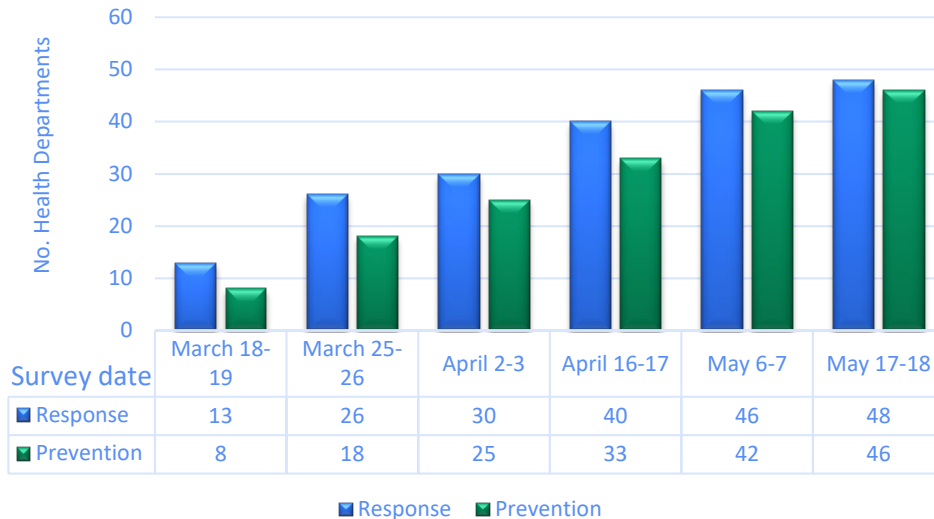
U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

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Infection Prevention and Control Assessment Tool for Nursing Homes Preparing for COVID-19:
www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/assessment-tool-for-nursing-homes.html

HAI Program COVID-19 ICAR Activity in Long-Term Care Facilities (LTCFs)

No. HDs Performing ICARs,
by Survey Date



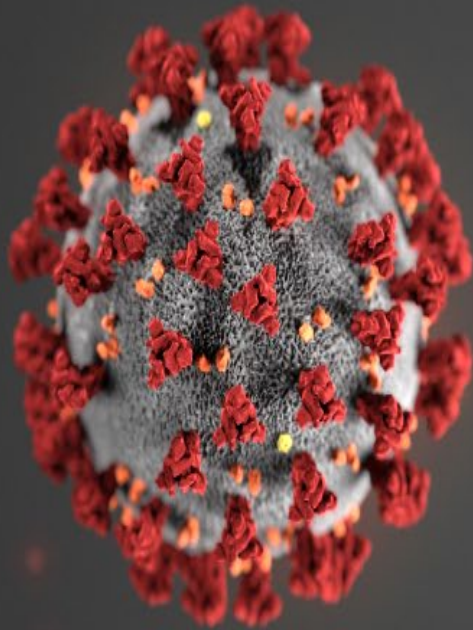
- Response ICARs in LTCF performed by HDs in 43 states and 5 local or territorial health departments
- Prevention ICARs in LTCF performed by HDs in 40 states and 6 local or territorial health departments
 - >4300 preparedness ICARs

Note: These data were provided by health department HAI Programs to CDC. For health departments that did not report data on a given survey, data were carried forward where possible. Data do not include any reports from Guam, Mariana Islands, or Marshall Islands.

CDC Tele-ICAR Process and Findings



- **From April 6 to June 18, CDC performed tele-ICARs for 699 nursing homes in 19 states**
- **Identified common gaps in core IPC practices and COVID-19 PPE use**
 - Preference for hand washing over alcohol-based hand sanitizer
 - Unknown disinfectant contact times
 - Correct use of PPE and PPE optimization strategies
- **Approximately 70% of facilities that received follow-up call reported making changes after ICAR**



For more information, contact CDC
1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)
TTY: 1-888-232-6348 www.cdc.gov

Thank you!

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



Open Discussion and Questions to Run On



- What are some best practices you have applied to implementing the Tele-ICAR during the pandemic?

Alliant Health Solutions:
The QIN-QIO for Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky,
Louisiana, North Carolina, and Tennessee



Jeana Partington, MS, BSN, RN, CPHQ, CPPS
Program Director for Alabama, Florida, and
Louisiana



COVID-19 Preparedness and Response in Alabama Nursing Homes

Partners:

- Alabama Department of Public Health
- Mobile/Jefferson County Epidemiologists
- CDC Field Team and Support
- Alliant QIN-QIO
- Alabama Nursing Home Association
- Alabama Nursing Homes, residents, and staff

Alabama Partnerships for Nursing Home Infection Control and Prevention Support



- CDC reviewed Alabama regarding trends in the tele-ICAR results
- CDC reached out to Alliant Quality to plan a strategic response for supporting the Alabama nursing homes
- Initial discussion with HAI/AR program, Alliant QIN-QIO, Licensing and Certification, Nursing Home Association (ANHA) to discuss goals (5/14)
- ANHA organized call with providers to discuss the opportunities for working with ADPH/CDC and solicited volunteers to participate in onsite assessment (5/15). Many corporations were most interested in learning together.
- ADPH team engaged and coordinated with Alabama Dept. of Public Health and District/County health departments around the state to participate in visits and IPC/PPE training (5/18)
- CDC team connected with 24 volunteer facilities
 - Conducted over 10 days at the end of May including Memorial Day! COVID-19 does not take a holiday or summer break.

Alabama Partnerships for Nursing Home Infection Control and Prevention Support



Goals:

- ✓ Evaluate the COVID-19 preparedness and response efforts.
- ✓ Utilize infection control assessment tool to review IPC practices, capacity and readiness to care for residents with COVID-19 infection.
- ✓ Work with nursing home providers to discuss challenges with implementation of infection prevention and management practices.

Initial Lessons Learned:

- ❖ Partnership between public health and nursing home partners can build capacity to support and care of patients and residents with COVID-19 infection
- ❖ Struggles with basic infrastructure and capacity – PPE supplies, staffing shortages, cleaning supplies, lack of hand sinks in patient rooms, separate locations for donning and doffing, etc.

Alabama Partnerships for Nursing Home Infection Control and Prevention Support



Next Steps:

- 6/16/2020: Implementation of Office Hours: Lessons learned call was held with CDC and Alabama Department of Health to share the findings of the 24 visits that were made, photos and genuine appreciation shared
- **COVID-19 Office Hour calls held every Tuesday and Thursday (30 minutes)**
 - NHSN
 - Updated CDC Guidelines
 - Identified topics of interest and concern
- **Monthly HAI Huddle (30 minutes)**
 - First huddle held on Friday, June 26, 2020
 - Facilitated by Alliant with a topic selected by Alabama DPH

Alabama Partnerships for Nursing Home Infection Control and Prevention Support



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**Erica Washington, MPH, CPH, CIC, CPHQ,
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**Healthcare-Associated Infections & Antibiotic
Resistance**

Program Coordinator

Open Discussion and Questions to Run On



- What do you find most helpful in the open Office Hour calls?

Health Services Advisory Group (HSAG)



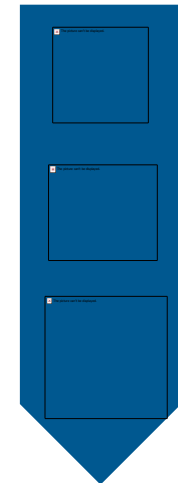
Jennifer Wieckowski, MSG
Senior Executive Director, California
Health Services Advisory Group (HSAG)

NHSN Enrollment



- Assistance to meet May 17 enrollment deadline
- Partnership to meet June 7 reporting deadline
 - CDPH Center for Health Care Quality Licensing and Certification Division
 - CDPH HAI Program
 - CAHF
 - CDC NHSN Help Desk
- Assistance included
 - Phone calls
 - Email and eblast reminders
 - Webinars

May 31
not
enrolled



June 7
not
enrolled

Source: CDPH

California Weekly Nursing Home Infection Preventionist Educational Calls



- CDPH All Facilities Letter (AFL) 20-50.1
- Weekly calls every Thursday—started May 7
 - CDPH Licensing and Certification Division
 - CDPH HAI Program
 - CALTCM
 - HSAG
- Weekly webinars every Wednesday—started June 24
- Purpose
 - Provide just-in-time education and guidance
 - Opportunity to ask questions fielded by experts

Open Discussion and Questions to Run On



- What assistance do you find most helpful with NHSN enrollment and data entry for COVID-19?



Health Quality Innovation Network

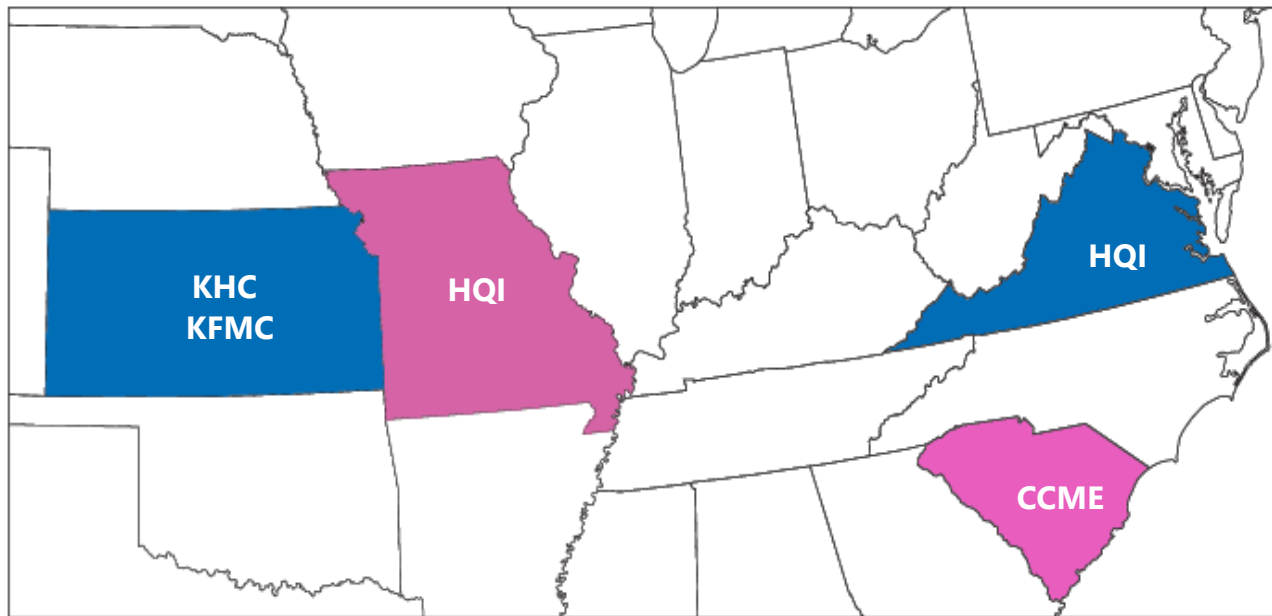


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HQI, Vice President**



**Karen Southard, RN, MHA, CPHQ
Program Director, CCME
South Carolina HQIN**

Health Quality Innovation Network



Partnerships in South Carolina

1. Partners meet weekly to discuss:

- Updates on nursing homes with COVID-19
- Challenges for facilities with outbreaks
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Infection Control Assessment and Response (ICAR) Tool
- Infection control and prevention educational needs

2. Activities include:

- Statewide process to request N95 fit testing through the National Guard
- Review of CDC National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) data reporting to address emerging issues
- Education addressing gaps in infection control practices



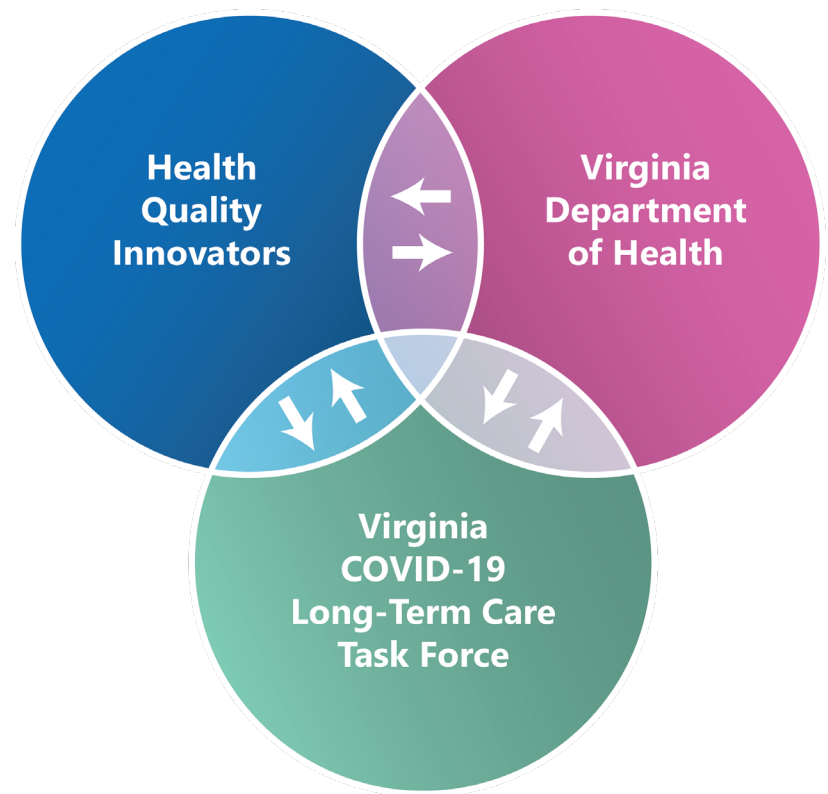
Partnerships in Virginia

1. Coordination

- ICARS
- NHSN enrollment and reporting
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Infection Control Quality Improvement Initiatives

2. Collaboration

- Guide on Hospital Transfer and Admission of Patients to LTCFs During COVID-19 Emergency
- Hospital to LTCF Transfer – COVID-19 Assessment



Thank you!

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Open Discussion and Questions to Run On



- Based on what you have heard today, please share how this may impact your work going forward.

Conclusion



- CMS, CDC, the QIN-QIOs and the State HAI/AR Prevention Programs are here to assist nursing homes.
- Connecting with local stakeholders can be a key to improving outcomes and remaining viable during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Learning & Action Network (LAN) Events give us another opportunity to hear from you and what you need, as well as an opportunity to hear how others are being successful.
- It was our pleasure to provide a robust presentation. We will plan additional LANs and we look forward to you joining us.

Thank You



THANK YOU

Your opinion is valuable to us. Please take a moment to complete the post event assessment here:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/06_30_20

We will use the information you provide to improve future events.