COVID-19 Transparency: Resident and Family Notification

4:00 – 5:00 PM ET

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Meet Your Speakers

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Objectives

During this webinar, participants will:

• Learn the latest federal guidance and policies regarding transparency

• Learn the importance of transparency during the COVID-19 public health emergency

• Learn about best practices to implement a comprehensive communication plan

• Learn strategies to improve transparency and provide compassionate care during challenging times
Federal Guidance and Policies Regarding Transparency

Requires accurate data collection and reporting to residents, their representatives and families in addition to the local, state and federal levels

- Data collection and reporting to the CDC’s National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) for viewing by facilities, stakeholders and public

DATE: May 6, 2020

TO: State Survey Agency Directors

FROM: Director
Quality, Safety & Oversight Group

SUBJECT: Interim Final Rule Updating Requirements for Notification of Confirmed and Suspected COVID-19 Cases Among Residents and Staff in Nursing Homes

COVID-19 Reporting Requirements: CMS is requiring nursing homes to report COVID-19 facility data to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and to residents, their representatives, and families of residents in facilities.

Transparency: CMS will begin posting data from the CDC National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) for viewing by facilities, stakeholders, or the general public. The COVID-19 public use file will be available on https://data.cms.gov.
New Regulatory Requirements

1. Require nursing homes to inform residents, their families and representatives of COVID-19 cases in their facilities

2. Require nursing homes to report cases of COVID-19 directly to the CDC

3. Require nursing homes to fully cooperate with CDC surveillance efforts around COVID-19 spread

AHCA/NCAL summary of CMS requirements and guidance, effective May 8, 2020:
https://www.ahcancal.org/facility_operations/disaster_planning/Documents/Notifications-Confirmed-Cases.pdf
Reporting Requirements: Notifying Residents, Resident Representatives and Families

- Report COVID-19 status within the nursing home by 5 p.m. of the next calendar day following the occurrence of either:
  - A single, confirmed COVID-19 infection among residents or staff
  - Three or more residents or staff with new-onset of respiratory symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infections in a 72-hour period (symptom clusters)
Weekly Cumulative Updates

- Nursing homes are required to provide weekly cumulative updates to residents, resident representatives and families.
- If new cases or symptom clusters are identified more frequently than weekly, nursing homes will not be required to make additional "cumulative weekly updates" notification, as each notification related to new cases and clusters must include cumulative updates.
- If a week has passed since identification of the last new case or symptom cluster and notification, nursing homes must provide a weekly update to residents, resident representatives and families.
Notification Guidelines

• Do not include any personally identifiable information

• Include information on mitigating actions implemented to prevent or reduce the risk of transmission, including if normal operations of the facility will be altered

• Include cumulative updates on COVID-19 cases and clusters of respiratory symptoms by at least weekly or by 5 p.m. the next calendar day following the subsequent occurrence
Notification Guidelines, cont.

• When surveying for compliance with this requirement, surveyors will interview residents and resident representatives to determine timely notifications

• Nursing homes are expected to make reasonable efforts to make it easy for residents, resident representatives and families to obtain the information nursing homes are required to provide
How to Meet Requirement

• Facilities should utilize group email lists, website postings, paper notification and/or recorded telephone messages

• Facilities are not expected to make individual telephone calls to each resident’s family or responsible party to inform them that a resident in the facility has laboratory-confirmed COVID-19

• CMS expects facilities to take reasonable efforts to make it easy for residents, their representatives and families to obtain the information facilities are required to provide
Transparency During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

• Relationship between:
  › Transparency
  › Accountability
  › Quality of nursing home care

• Transparency mechanisms:
  › Nursing Home Compare
  › Nursing Home Quality Initiative (NHQI)
COVID-19-Focused Survey for Nursing Homes

7. Reporting to Residents, Representatives, and Families

Identify the mechanism(s) the facility is using to inform residents, their representatives, and families (e.g., newsletter, email, website, recorded voice message).

- Did the facility inform all residents, their representatives, and families by 5 PM the next calendar day following the occurrence of a single confirmed COVID-19 infection or of three or more residents or staff with new onset of respiratory symptoms that occurred within 72 hours of each other?

- Did the information include mitigating actions taken by the facility to prevent or reduce the risk of transmission, including if normal operations in the nursing home will be altered (e.g., restrictions to visitation or group activities)?

- Did the information include personally identifiable information?

- Is the facility providing cumulative updates to residents, their representatives, and families at least weekly or by 5 PM the next calendar day following the subsequent occurrence of either: each time a confirmed COVID-19 infection is identified, or whenever three or more residents or staff with new onset of respiratory symptoms occur within 72 hours of each other?

- Interview a resident and a resident representative or family member to determine whether they are receiving timely notifications.

7. Did the facility inform residents, their representatives, and families of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases in the facility along with mitigating actions in a timely manner?  

☐ Yes  ☐ No F885
Posting Facility-Level COVID-19 Data

• Reporting supports CMS’s responsibility to protect and ensure the health and safety of residents

• Necessary for tracking, response and mitigation of the spread and impact of COVID-19 on our most vulnerable citizens, personnel who care for them and the general public

• The information provided will be used to inform residents, families and communities of the status of COVID-19 infections in their area

Barriers to Improving Transparency

- Staff shortage
- Testing availability, reliability
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) availability
- Data
- Visitation restrictions
- Disparities related to resident representative access to internet/information
Challenges Emerging from Constant Stream of Information

- Ongoing media coverage
- County, state and federal updates
- Family/community updates on evolving situation at the nursing home
Comprehensive Communication Plan

Guides communication with:

• Staff, local-state-federal government
• Residents and families
• Long-term care ombudsman
• Media
• Other health care entities:
  › Local hospitals
  › Emergency medical services
  › Other long-term care and residential facilities
  › Relevant community organizations including those involved with disaster preparedness
COVID-19 Preparedness Checklist

• Refer to the “Facility Communications” section of the CDC’s [Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Preparedness Checklist for Nursing Homes and other Long-Term Care Settings](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care-settings.html)

• Refer to other state-specific guidance
  › [Toolkit on State Actions to Mitigate COVID-19 Prevalence in Nursing Homes](https://www.tfhc.edu/toolkit) (June 2020 Version 3)
Communication Strategies

• Provide high-level communication to all residents and their families

• Provide customized, detailed and frequent communication for COVID positive residents

• Use interpreters when needed

• Stay positive
  › Meals in room: “room service”

• Offer options
  › When visitors are turned away, offer the opportunity to write a greeting card to the loved one and deliver it to the resident’s room
Family-Centered Care During COVID

• Support meaningful connections to minimize feelings of isolation
  › Person-Centered Guidelines for Preserving Family Presence in Challenging Times
  › Connectors between residents and family care partners

• Refer to Family-Centered Care During the COVID-19 Era – a toolbox for supporting family presence in non-physical ways:
  › Barriers to Family Communication and Potential Mitigation Strategies
  › Strategies for Communication During Physical Distancing
Communication with Families

• Telephone calls
  › Not all families have access to broadband internet, smart phone, data plans, etc.

• Video calls – cell phones or tablets/devices
  › FaceTime, Skype, Zoom, Google Duo calls (multiple people can video chat)

• Automated Voice Broadcasting Systems and Text Message (SMS)

• Scripting
  › ACHA/NCAL Template for Notification to Residents, Representatives and Family Members
  › Advocate Aurora Health Family Communication System Protocol
Compassionate Connections

• Get to know the resident
  › Health Care Information – person-centered profile
  › Tell Me More® (TMM)

• Prevent PPE from depersonalizing care, creating barriers
  › Let the resident see your face from a distance before donning mask/PPE
  › Use clear face masks to prevent masks from interfering with communication
  › Attach a headshot/photo to your gown
    ▪ PPE Portrait Project was designed to improve Ebola care
Conversation Guides

• COVID-Ready Scripted Communication Skills
  › Difficult and complicated discussions
  › Helpful responses to potential questions
    ▪ What they say – What you say
    ▪ Situation – Recognize – Connect – Support

• Planetree International: Language of Caring branch
  › Caring Messages Applicable During the COVID-19 Pandemic
  › Re-Thinking Word Choice During This Pandemic
    ▪ Instead of “lockdown” consider “shelter-in-place” (avoid wartime connotations)
Shared Decision-Making and Serious Illness Conversations

• Address goals of care and treatment decisions with resident and/or their representative

• Inform about availability of virtual palliative care and hospice services, as appropriate

Resources:

• National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Shared Decision-Making Tool

• Ariadne Labs: COVID-19 Conversation Guide for Long-Term Care
Advance Care Planning

- Advocate Aurora Health: [Advance Care Planning During COVID-19 Toolkit](#)
- [Respecting Choices®](#) Person-Centered Care
- [PREPARE for your care™](#)
- [VitalTalk Tips App](#) – “Build your communication superpowers...over time your inner communication ninja will emerge.”
- Center to Advance Palliative Care (CAPC)
  - [CAPC COVID-19 Response Resources Hub](#)
Resources

Locate your QIN-QIO

Improve Long-Term Care in Nursing Homes and Skilled Nursing Facilities

The TMF Quality Innovation Network is recruiting nursing homes and skilled nursing facilities in Arkansas, Mississippi, Nebraska, Puerto Rico, Texas and the U.S. Virgin Islands to improve performance on initiatives as defined by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services:

- Improve medication safety and the use of opioid medications.
- Prevent infections and improve antibiotic stewardship programs.
- Improve resident mobility and function to help prevent falls and pressure ulcers/injuries.
- Improve early recognition of change in resident's condition to reduce emergency department visits and hospital admissions or readmissions.
Additional Resources for Nursing Home and Long-term Care Facilities

Only show items containing the term:

How to Handrub? How to Handwash?
The World Health Organization provides this graphic tool to add value to any hand hygiene improvement strategy.

Your Five Moments for Hand Hygiene
Download and share this handout from the World Health Organization that shows when it is important to wash your hands when caring for a patient or resident.

Hospital to Long-term Care Facility Transfer – COVID-19 Assessment
Use this COVID-19 assessment by Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association and others to facilitate communication during transition between care settings.
Key Takeaways

• Be timely with resident and family notifications and reporting data

• Have a comprehensive communication plan in place and implement best practice interventions for effective communication and care
References

- https://www.medicare.gov/nursinghomecompare/search.html
- https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Nursing+Home+Quality+Initiative
- https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7175858/
- https://www.gold-foundation.org/programs/tell-me-more/tell-me-more-kit-for-covid-19-care/
- http://www.ppeportrait.org/
References, cont.

- https://respectingchoices.org/covid-19-resources/
- https://www.vitaltalk.org/vitaltalk-apps/
- https://prepareforyourcare.org/covid-19
- https://www.capc.org/toolkits/covid-19-response-resources/
- https://qioprogram.org/locate-your-qio
For more information, please contact:

nhnetwork@tmf.org
Open Discussion and Questions
Join us!

Thursday, July 9, 2020
from 4:00 - 5:00 pm ET

Nursing Home Training Call #7:
Managing Staffing Challenges

https://qioprogram.org/nursing-home-trainings
Thank You

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

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/07_02_20

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