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Visit our COVID-19 Page Here

Dear Member:

Effective April 1, 2021, DLC Will No Longer Remind Nursing Homes of POC Deadlines

Currently, the Division of Licensing and Certification (DLC) has been calling nursing facilities at least two (2) days prior to the Plan of Correction due date to remind them of the deadline. Nursing homes received a memo today via email announcing that effective April 1, 2021, DLC will no longer be reminding facilities of POC due dates. Please read the [DLC memo](#) for details and be sure to mark your calendars accordingly. Missed deadlines can result in remedies and termination of provider agreements!

Important Key Points from ME CDC and OADS Call: 3/3/2021

For group A facilities (SNF/NF/AL etc.) that are subject to federal CMS regulations you may experience two types of action following worker exposure of COVID-19.

Work Restriction and/or quarantine are two types of responses to COVID exposure but are not mutually exclusive. Healthcare workers MIGHT be subject to a work restriction if they are fully vaccinated but they may NOT be subject to a quarantine in their outside lives. CDC was provided a table of the expectations which can be found [here](#) under the Maine CDC header. Please refer to the Maine CDC table of examples to determine what your facility and staff should do. At this time, the Division of Licensing does not have any updates on the use of the J&J vaccination in LTC and congregate care homes.

Maine Adopts Age-Based Approach to COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility

The State of Maine has updated its vaccination plan to reflect emerging science, progress in vaccinating its oldest residents, and increasing vaccine supply. The planned schedule, which is subject to change depending on fluctuations in vaccine supply including an acceleration if supply increases, is as follows:

- March 3: Eligibility expands to residents age 60 and older
- April: Eligibility expands to age 50 and older
- May: Eligibility expands to age 40 and older
- June: Eligibility expands to age 30 and older
- July and beyond: Eligibility expands to ages 29 and under, including youth and children pending authorization of age appropriate vaccines

This update to Maine's vaccination strategy reflects recent scientific data indicating that age is among the strongest predictors of whether an individual is likely to get seriously ill and die from COVID-19.

Federal CDC develops new trainings for HCW

The U.S. CDC has developed [new trainings](#) for healthcare professionals that are needed to support COVID-19 vaccination efforts nationwide. Training is important not only for those who will prepare and administer vaccine, but also for those responsible for other critical, mandatory functions, including protecting the vaccine cold chain, inputting required data, and ensuring

vaccine recipients receive documentation of vaccination. A variety of healthcare professionals and personnel will be needed to implement COVID-19 vaccination efforts.

Accessing COVID-19 Vaccine in Long Term Care After the Pharmacy Partnership

MHCA continues advocating to Maine CDC and the Maine Immunization Program to provide a vaccination plan for new long term care residents and staff. The greatest impediment to progress is the lack of vaccine supply over the next 2-3 weeks and increased overall demand. Despite the good news of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, its supply appears to be far less than expected by the States. We will be surveying members to determine who your LTC pharmacy is and the weekly demand for new admissions and new hires. The data collected will be provided to Maine CDC to inform their planning.

In the meantime, AHCA/NCAL has drafted new [guidance](#) on accessing COVID-19 vaccine in long term care after the LTC Pharmacy Partnership Program is completed. This guidance lays out action steps members should take immediately to ensure ongoing access to vaccine, including possible avenues to receive and administer the vaccine.

COVID-19 Vaccine Administration Coverage and Claim Coding in Skilled Nursing Facilities

AHCA/NCAL has created a [fact sheet](#) providing an overview of COVID-19 vaccine coverage under Medicare Part B and how it interacts with Medicare Part A and Medicare Advantage. It discusses common situations where external mass immunizers, such as LTC pharmacies, may be responsible for vaccine administration for claim billing. For SNFs that elect to administer and bill for the COVID-19 vaccine, it summarizes the key coverage and claim coding requirements. SNF billing staff should review these requirements and discuss with billing software vendors to assure that the required specifications are included to permit COVID-19 vaccine billing.

COVID-19 Webinar Recording Available

- Recording Available! [Office Hours: Vaccine Distribution in LTC](#)
- Hosted by AHCA/NCAL
- [Access the Recording](#)

Sincerely,

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