



Visit our COVID-19 Page Here

**Dear Member:**

**New Date and Time for Safe Reunions 2.0: Visitation Webinar for LTC Families and Residents!**

*Safe Reunions 2.0: New guidance on visitation for families with loved ones in long-term care facilities will take place Tuesday, April 27th, 2021 from 2-3 pm EST via Zoom.*

Hosted by The Maine Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program • Leading Age Maine and New Hampshire • Maine Health Care Association

Featuring: Dr. Stephen Sears, Epidemiologist & MeCDC Clinical Advisor–COVID-19 Response Team and William Montejo, Director, Division of Licensing and Certification, Department of Health and Human Services

To register: [Safe Reunions 2.0 New Date and Time](#)

**Summary of Today's CDC/DHHS MD/Clinician Call**

- Bamlanivimab (Bamlan) ALONE is no longer a recommended COVID-19 therapy. Federal CDC has reversed the EAU for this treatment option when used as a sole medication. There is a combination med that is still a viable option. The pharmacy partner should be aware of how to acquire this combination drug. The FDA announcement regarding no longer authorizing this treatment medication alone can be found here.
- J&J Vaccination Update: Following VAES (Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System) data analysis indicated a rare side effect with the use of J&J vaccination called Central Venous Sinus Thrombosis (CVST) in 6 (out of 6.8 million) cases of individuals age 18-48. The concern is that this causes clotting and reduced platelets simultaneously which is VERY unusual. Some relationship to the vaccine from AstraZeneca in EU. This has NOT BEEN SEEN with the mRNA vaccines (Pfizer and Moderna). Check here for more information regarding mRNA vaccination efficacy.
- If you use monoclonal antibodies and the resident has NOT been vaccinated prior, according to federal CDC guidance you need to wait at least 90 days to vaccinate following the use of this treatment to ensure the efficacy of the vaccine.
- Maine DHHS and Licensing is currently working on revisions to the community guidance document (table A & B document) in light of the need for continued clarification on visitation in outbreak or positive COVID-19 case situations. The confusion seems to be that in CMS memo QSO-20-39 CMS refers to the presence of 1 case as an outbreak; HOWEVER, Maine definition is still 3 or more positive COVID cases. Unless specifically told by MeCDC epidemiology when a facility has one (1) positive case you should immediately initiate universal testing. If a facility has a positive case on a specific unit they should immediately conduct universal testing and you can close to visitation on the specific unit.

- If you are struggling with what or who to consider a close contact exposure you can see the exposure investigation checklist attached here which can help how to determine if the resident meets definition of a close contact and warrants quarantine: <http://maineinfectionpreventionforum.org/>
- LTCOP, MHCA and MeDHHS has released a PSA to recruit and encourage direct care worker on local news stations. (See separate article below)
- In addition, MHCA, LeadingAge ME-NH, and the LTCOP Family Visitation Call has been rescheduled for Apr 27, 2021 02:00 PM EST, families, residents and facility providers can register in advance for this meeting at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcpcO6vrDsjG9LbyGCaHe5OntzGV2ReaCd>

PLEASE NOTE: The Medical Director call has shifted to twice monthly and will be held on the first and third Tuesday of each month. The next dates will be Tuesday May 4th, and May 18th at 11:00 am. The same zoom call login remains.

### **MHCA, LTCOP and DHHS Partner on PSA for Direct Care Staff Recruitment**

MHCA, LTCOP and DHHS recently partnered to produce the following Public Service Announcement (PSA) for direct care staff recruitment. The PSA features many faces familiar to long term care and serves to connect job seekers with the State's website <https://www.connecttocarejobs.com/#/>.

The PSA, which is currently running on television stations across the state, serves the purposes of letting the public know about the urgent need for staff as well as promoting the website. Please share the PSA with others and add it to your website and social media platforms. We appreciate your help in this recruitment effort: [MHCA8175.mp4 - Google Drive](#).

### **FEMA COVID-19 Funeral Assistance**

COVID-19 has brought overwhelming grief to many families, and FEMA is dedicated to helping ease some of the financial stress and burden caused by the virus. Under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, FEMA is providing financial assistance for COVID-19 related funeral expenses incurred after January 20, 2020.

There is a dedicated toll-free phone number listed below to get a COVID-19 Funeral Assistance application completed with help from FEMA's representatives. Multilingual services will be available. You can also get answers to frequently asked questions about the application process and who is eligible on FEMA's [Funeral Assistance FAQ page](#).

COVID-19 Funeral Assistance Line Number:

Applications begin on April 12, 2021

**844-684-6333** | TTY: 800-462-7585

Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday, 9AM to 9PM Eastern Time

### **AHCA Webinar on SNF Proposed Payment Rule Tomorrow**

As previously reported, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently issued its fiscal year (FY) 2022 skilled nursing facility [proposed payment rule](#). The announcement of the proposed rule triggers an open comment period between now and June 7, 2021, which gives stakeholders an opportunity to weigh in. Join AHCA President Mark Parkinson for a [webinar on Wednesday, April 21 at 2:30 PM Eastern](#) where he will brief members on the impact of the rule proposal on the profession, and experts will provide guidance for submitting comments to CMS about the proposed approaches by the June 7 deadline. The potential short- and long-term impacts of this proposal are significant. That is why AHCA is asking members to participate in the comment period. If you are willing to weigh in, AHCA will provide a template on tomorrow's webinar.

Sincerely,

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