



Visit our COVID-19 Page Here

Dear Member,

Please see the separate email update today from AHCA (Update #12) regarding PPE conservation, 3-day stay waiver and telehealth.

### **MHCA Staffing Decision Trees now available!**

MHCA staff, corporate leaders and clinicians from member facilities, the QIO and pharmacy representatives recently met at Continuum Healthcare to share experiences, best practices, challenges as COVID-19 unfolds in Maine. Specifically, the group worked on the development of Staff Decision Making Trees. These materials are now available on our web page at <https://www.mehca.org/covid>. We encourage you to print and share these widely. MHCA thanks these professionals for lending their time and expertise to this work!

### **Weekly Maine CDC call for long term care facilities**

The Maine CDC (Rita Owsiak, Healthcare-Associated Infection Coordinator) will host a weekly call, ***Coronavirus Update for Long Term Care Facilities*** every Wednesday at 1:00 pm. Please share with others as appropriate. The access information, which will remain the same each week, follows:

Every week on Wednesday at 1:00 PM Eastern Time

<https://zoom.us/j/570558574>

Meeting ID: 570 558 574

Phone line if needed for audio, 1-646-558-8656

### **Highlights from today's Maine CDC call for long term care**

- As testing increases, so do confirmed cases. There is community spread only in Cumberland County at this time.
- CDC now notes that healthcare personnel should perform hand hygiene by using alcohol-based hand sanitizer (ABHR) with 60-95% alcohol **or** washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If hands are visibly soiled, use soap and water before returning to ABHR. The FDA has given pharmacies the approval to make their own alcohol-based sanitizers now so check with your pharmacy provider. Avoid reusing hand sanitizer containers; once empty, throw away.
- CDC has issued new guidance for HCWs returning to work: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/hcp-return-work.html> We posted these documents to our web page yesterday. Of Note: staff who have been symptom free and have two consecutive nasopharyngeal swab specimens collected  $\geq 24$  hours apart (total of two negative specimens) may return to

work following a positive COVID19 test result.

- Yesterday, the CDC held a call for Clinicians. In addition to the content, long term care providers will find the Q&A especially helpful. To access the recording: (MHCA note: It was an hour well spent)  
[https://emergency.cdc.gov/coca/calls/2020/callinfo\\_031720.asp](https://emergency.cdc.gov/coca/calls/2020/callinfo_031720.asp)
- Maine CDC reiterated the importance of having policies that allow staff to stay home when they're sick – Washington state case study shows COVID-19 spread occurred from health care workers – including those who worked in more than one facility.
- CDC recommends twice daily monitoring if staff members have symptoms.
- There is a shortage of PPE. Facilities should be taking steps to maximize supply - look at the CDC guidance of reuse of N-95 and apply to surgical masks (CDC only verbally saying that at this time). Here is the printed guidance for N-95 reuse: (also on MHCA web site)
  - CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirators-strategy/index.html>
  - NIOSH: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hcwcontrols/recommendedguidanceextuse.html>
- In terms of testing, Maine CDC reminds facilities that when considering admissions, having a negative test does not guarantee the person is completely clear. You should screen for signs and symptoms like you normally would and CDC does not recommend testing asymptomatic people. As testing supplies dwindle, we will likely begin to test only serious symptoms, but we're not at that point yet.
- If your employees can't get a medical order to test, you should follow the return to work guidelines.
- The State is working on additional testing sites; more information to follow.
- Erring on the side of caution, CDC suggests you shouldn't let outside food/packaging into your facilities.

Stay tuned for additional updates tomorrow.

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