



Visit our COVID-19 Page Here

Dear Member:

### **CMS Releases Targeted COVID-19 Training for Frontline Nursing Home Staff & Management**

This training is available now, with five specific modules designed for frontline clinical staff and 10 designed for nursing home management. The training will be available on the [CMS Quality, Safety & Education Portal](#). *There was no indication in the CMS press release that this training is directly tied to the provider relief fund. MHCA will continue to monitor this with our federal partners and update members accordingly.*

The training for frontline staff, called “CMS Targeted COVID-19 Training for Frontline Nursing Home Staff” covers five topics separated into five modules. These modules address some of the most common concerns found by surveyors and strike teams, basic infection control and prevention; as well as, the most urgent needs of frontline nursing home staff. The training for management, covers 10 topics separated into 10 modules. These modules are comprehensive, focusing on infection control and cleanliness but also larger institution-wide issues like implementation of telehealth, emergency preparedness, and vaccine delivery.

In addition, CMS is directing Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs) to include the training in the action plans that QIOs develop in collaboration with each nursing home they assist. This will help ensure that nursing homes are building the training into their existing quality improvement efforts.

Finally, while the training announced today is comprehensive, CMS and CDC will also have subject matter experts available on bi-weekly webinars from August 27, 2020, through January 7, 2021, from 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. ET, to answer questions. Registration is required for these Question & Answer sessions. Participants can register on the Zoom webinar [registration page](#).

### **REMINDER: Maine Facility Staff Testing Plans due to DLC by August 28, 2020**

All nursing facilities were notified in the May 18, 2020, CMS QSO-20-30-NH, of the need to establish a testing plan. The Division of Licensing and Certification (DLC) expects that facilities have been working on these plans and all facilities should have their testing plans in place by August 28, 2020. The testing plan must include the facility’s plan/process for conducting baseline testing of all staff (including volunteers, vendors, student nurses and nurse aids) and for conducting retesting consistent with Maine CDC staff retesting recommendations. Once a nursing facility has completed its testing plan, it shall be submitted to DLC at [dhrs.info@maine.gov](mailto:dhrs.info@maine.gov) where a copy will be maintained in the facility licensing file. Facilities should review and revise their plans when testing options and standards change and shall submit any revised plans to DLC once the facility has finalized their revised plan. Additionally, once facilities have completed baseline testing of all staff, they shall submit notification of completion and results to DLC at [dhrs.info@maine.gov](mailto:dhrs.info@maine.gov).

### **HETL Swab and Transport Media Chart**

Maine CDC staff has created the [attached swab and media transport chart](#) outlining the various types of swabs and transport media that can be used for COVID testing, including both provider-collected and self-collected swabs. Members may want to reference this document as part of your testing plans.

### **ProjectECHO Series for Nursing Home Best Practices during COVID-19**

Announced by CMS last week, this initiative is a partnership between ProjectECHO, AHRQ and IHI charged with sharing of best practices in order to mitigate the risk of COVID-19, take care of our residents and allow visitation between our residents and their loved ones. The primary ProjectECHO program will begin on September 15, 2020. The ask is that each nursing home across country participate in 16-90min tele-sessions. The facilities who participate will be eligible for a minimum of \$6000 reimbursement for their time and commitment to Health Care Quality. Following the 16-90 minute sessions there will be **optional**, once per week office hours. If an individual participates in at least 35 of the total 52 sessions (16 initial sessions, and subsequent 36 optional weekly sessions) participants will receive a certificate of completion in Quality Improvement from ProjectECHO.

Today's session was the first of 3 introductory kick off sessions. These sessions are recorded and are not required as a part of the 16 initial sessions to qualify for the funding **but** set the stage for the work of the project moving forward. The next 2 sessions are as follows:

Wednesday, August 26

1:30 PM Eastern

The Latest News on Testing, Cohorting, and Critical Infection Prevention Strategies

Wednesday, September 2

1:30 PM Eastern

Telemedicine in the Time of COVID

You may register here:

[https://echo.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_PNTGE61iTmaQnkRXreb\\_7w](https://echo.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_PNTGE61iTmaQnkRXreb_7w)

MHCA's understanding is that this program will be facilitated regionally by an educational institution. Currently, the partnership members are accepting applications from institutions to facilitate the regional "HUB". MHCA expects that Northern New England will be a 'hub' of at least the 3 most northern states (ME, NH, VT). Maine facilities will be encouraged to participate beginning on September 15 and as we learn more about this developing opportunity we will plan to share rapidly to ensure facilities are able to take advantage.

Thank you for all you do to care for your residents and staff.

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