



Visit our COVID-19 Page Here

Dear Member:

### **MaineCare Rate Letters Coming Soon**

On Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, MHCA met with DHHS officials to discuss a proposal that would provide prompt financial relief for long term care facilities, as they face unknown COVID-19 costs. Agreement was reached to provide a temporary supplemental rate increase to LTC facilities. Facilities will still have the option of pursuing extraordinary circumstance applications for any additional COVID-19 costs not covered by the supplemental payment. **Today, we received word from the Department that it expects NF rate letters to be out by end of today and PNMI rate letters by Tuesday.**

### **MHCA President and CEO featured on Maine Calling**

MHCA President and CEO Rick Erb was a panelist today on Maine Public's weekly radio call-in show, *Maine Calling*. Erb was invited to discuss how long term care facilities statewide are responding to and managing COVID-19. He was joined by fellow panelists, DHHS Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew and Maine CDC Director, Dr. Nirav Shah. Listener questions and comments were thoughtful; listen to the show here [how-are-maines-congregate-care-places-dealing-virus](#).

### **CDC Updated Criteria for Return to Work**

On April 13, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released new interim [guidance](#) on return to work criteria for healthcare personnel (HCP) with confirmed or suspected COVID-19. Centers are to use the test-based strategy as the preferred method for determining when HCP may return to work. If test-based strategy cannot be used, the non-test-based strategy may be used for determining when HCP may return to work. HCP with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 who have not had any symptoms should be excluded from work until 10 days have passed since the first date of their positive COVID-19 diagnostic test, assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms since their positive test.

### **Suspension of Standard Surveys Continues**

CMS announced on its national call with nursing homes on April 15 that the suspension of standard surveys will continue until further notice. This means the [CMS guidance](#) released on March 23 has been extended until CMS states otherwise. CMS will continue to conduct surveys for immediate jeopardy situations and additional infection control focused surveys using this [tool](#).

Use this tool to perform self-assessments of your infection control policies, plans, and practices, including visitor entry and screening; infection surveillance; education, monitoring, and screening of staff; handwashing, donning and doffing of PPE, and other transmission-based precautions.

Surveyors entering the building should bring their own PPE; be sure to screen surveyors as you would any visitor to the building, which now includes temperature checks. Surveyors should spend as little time onsite as possible for these surveys and are instructed not to investigate routine issues.

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

Nadine L. Grosso  
Vice President and Director of Communications  
[ngrosso@mehca.org](mailto:ngrosso@mehca.org)