



Visit our COVID-19 Page Here

Dear Member:

Summary of Today's CDC Medical Director/Clinician Call

Maine COVID By the Numbers

- 3975 Cases, 388 Hospitalized in total since March 2020
- 1 individual in the ICU, 11 in Non-ICU, 1 individual is on a ventilator
- 123 total deaths
- 3024 resolved
- 0.87 positivity
- Outbreaks seem to be on blueberry farms and businesses and not in healthcare

Update on Nursing Home Testing Guidance document: Bill Montejo, DHHS

This week there will be guidance advisory on baseline testing and ongoing testing for nursing home staff. This guidance from Maine DHHS DLC will focus specifically on nursing homes to identify ways to move from phase I-II and reopening. Assisted Housing providers are not addressed in this plan and a separate meeting is planned to discuss this as it requires additional discussion due to the level of care.

This guidance will assist facilities to design their testing policies and protocols specifically to staff testing in the process of moving from phase I-II. The guidance and current thought lie in the idea that nursing homes are doing baseline testing of staff but not of residents. In addition, there would be guidance on frequent retesting of staff and testing of residents would occur only when there is presence of positive cases within the facility's own community. ***This guidance should be released this week.*** Visitation in Phase II is still restricted to compassionate care circumstances with slightly more allowances in certain situations.

MHCA has offered comment and posed questions for clarification of this draft guidance document to DHHS and the Division of Licensing. At this time, we strongly suggest that nursing home providers that have questions, concerns or comments specific to this new guidance email Bill Montejo, Director of Licensing directly at william.montejo@maine.gov with CC to Danielle Watford of MHCA, dwatford@meorca.org in order for MHCA to be able to accurately follow and track the areas of this document that our members are needing clarity on.

In addition, DHHS states that it is looking to develop rules that would require assisted housing providers to meet infection prevention training requirements like nursing homes. MHCA will be repeating the Infection Prevention Education program originally completed in July that was specifically developed for Assisted Housing providers. A registration link will be coming out soon but in the meantime you can SAVE the Date: September 10, 11, 17, and 18th from 9-10:30am. These will be 4 separate 90-minute live modules and participants will receive the Assisted Housing policy and procedure toolkit free with registration.

The issue of CNA training was also raised with regard to establishing on-site programs and training in facilities, rotations of training and expediting the approval of courses to address staff shortages. Bill Montejo stated that facilities should contact Robert Carr regarding these questions. **At this time, we strongly suggest that nursing home providers that have questions, concerns or comments specific to CNA training that they email Bill Montejo, Director of Licensing directly at william.montejo@maine.gov and Robert Carr at**

Robert.E.Carr@maine.gov with CC to Danielle Watford of MHCA, dwatford@mehca.org in order for MHCA to be able to accurately follow and track the areas that our members are needing clarity on to ensure we are able to develop training programs to meet our resident needs.

CDC Hospice Note:

CDC recommends that facilities with hospice providers, **specifically hospice nurses who are visiting residents in other facilities on COVID positive units**, discuss limiting these visits when practical. CDC noted that this would help limit exposure of COVID positive and COVID negative providers in naïve facilities.

Maine LTC Ombudsman to Offer Free ZOOM Call for Families, MHCA to Participate

The Maine LTC Ombudsman Program is hosting, *Staying Connected While Apart: A conversation for families with loved ones in long-term care facilities* on August 13th, 2020 from 3:30pm to 5pm via ZOOM.

Featuring:

Dr. Susan Wehry, MD, *Chief of Geriatrics, University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine*

With special guests:

William Montejo, *Director, Division of Licensing and Certification, Department of Health and Human Services*

Danielle Watford, *Director, Quality Improvement and Regulatory Affairs, Maine Health Care Association*

The pandemic has impacted everyone but perhaps none more than people living in long-term care and their families and friends. As we begin our long journey of recovery from this unprecedented disaster (at least in our lifetimes), it's time to tell your stories, take stock of where we've been, where we are and where we're headed. We'll look at the usual stages of recovery in an ongoing disaster, answer questions about the rationale for specific precautions, talk specifically about visitation in long term care, including phased re-openings and emerging views on essential visitors, compassionate care and critical support. Together we'll think about lessons learned in hopes of being even better prepared in the future. Finally, we'll talk about ways of taking care of ourselves and each other in this challenging time.

Families are encouraged to register in advance for this free event but registration will remain open until the beginning of the call. <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/>

CMS Issues Final Rule for FY 2021 SNF PPS

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently issued the final rule for the skilled nursing facility (SNF) prospective payment system (PPS) fiscal year (FY) 2021 update. See [CMS fiscal-year-2021-payment-and-policy-changes-medicare-skilled-nursing-facilities](#)

We are pleased to report that the final rule includes a **net market basket increase of 2.2 percent**. The final market basket is one tenth lower than the proposed market basket of 2.3 percent due to updated data reflecting substantial changes in the macroeconomic forecast due to COVID-19 CMS estimates that the net market basket update would increase Medicare SNF payments by approximately \$750 million in FY 2021.

As AHCA predicted, CMS issued the final rule with few changes in the Patient-Driven Payment Model (PDPM) payment policy section. Updates were limited to nominal additions/deletions of ICD-10 codes used to map the primary reason for SNF stay diagnosis to appropriate PDPM clinical categories from the lists included in the proposed rule.

AHCA has developed a summary (member login required at <https://members.ahcancal.org/Dashboard/Sign-In>) of the payment updates, the SNF value-based purchasing program, and the IMPACT Act quality reporting additions.

Next CMS Open Door Forum This Week

The next CMS Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF)/Long Term Care (LTC) Open Door Forum scheduled for:

Date: Thursday, August 6, 2020

Start Time: 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM Eastern Time (ET);

Please dial-in at least 15 minutes before call start time.

The Forum will feature announcements and updates on the following:

- FY 2021 SNF Prospective Payment Final Rule
- SNF Value Based Purchasing

- Payroll Based Journal Update
 - Policy Questions should be sent to NHStaffing@cms.hhs.gov
 - Technical Issues/Questions should be sent to igies@cms.hhs.gov
 - PBJ Website: <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/NursingHomeQualityInits/Staffing-Data-Submission-PBJ.html>
- MDS 3.0 Item Sets updates

Open Door Participation Instructions:

This call will be Conference Call Only. To participate by phone: **Dial: 1-888-455-1397 &**

Conference Passcode: 9375124

To access the Instant Replay one hour after the call has ended: 1-800-925-4415; Conference Passcode: No Passcode Needed

This Week's CMS National Nursing Home Training Webinar

The Topic: COVID-19 Surveillance to Enable Early Detection and Response to Outbreaks: NHSN Mandatory Data Collection

Following today's call, participants will possess the knowledge and approaches for remaining current in federal guidance and reporting requirements as well as the importance of conducting regular outcome and process surveillance.

During this webinar, participants will receive an overview of the following:

- Brief overview of federal reporting requirements and information on where to access the most up-to-date information and guidance
- Understand and recognize the purpose of, and key elements necessary for, ongoing COVID-19 surveillance
- Understand how a facility should use surveillance data for the prevention, early detection, and mitigation of a potential COVID-19 outbreak
- How to collect, enter, and submit data to the NHSN COVID-19 LTCF COVID-19 Module, including assigning a dedicated Infection Preventionist to conduct ongoing facility-wide surveillance
- Understand how HHS, CMS and CDC use data reported to the CDC NHSN LTCF COVID-19 Module

Date: **Thursday, August 6, 2020**

Time: 4:00 – 5:00 PM ET

Advance Registration Required: [Register here](#)

Note: **Once you register, you will receive an email with your individual link to join the webcast. The link you receive will only work for one user.** Please forward this email to other team members if you would like them to attend so they can register. The webcast audio will stream through your computer speakers. For the best experience, be sure to have headphones or your volume turned up. We recommend closing any other applications that may be open, especially those that use up bandwidth.

Audience: Open to nursing home leaders, clinical and administrative staff members and others interested in nursing home infection prevention in the era of COVID-19.

Series Description: The National Nursing Home Training Series is brought to you by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the QIO Program, a national network of Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement Organizations (QIN-QIOs) serving every state and territory.

Invitations are distributed weekly for each training in the series . [Sign up here for updates](#). Miss a training? View recordings, slides and resources on QIOProgram.org.

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

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