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Dear Member:

Great News on Testing for AL and SNFs - Tune in to Abbott Webinar Tomorrow!

AHCA/NCAL has learned today that this week the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will be sending 1 million Abbott BinaxNOW™ test kits to skilled nursing facilities and 540,000 test kits to assisted living communities certified by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) with a Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendment (CLIA) Certificate of Waiver.

Members are invited to a webinar on **Friday, September 18 at 12:00 pm ET** with HHS and Abbott to get more information on the tests themselves, including training, and use in assisted living facilities. During the webinar, Abbott will demonstrate the training tools available and representatives from the U.S. government will be online to speak about the program.

[Register now](#) for the webinar. *(Please note, it says the webinar is for AL providers; it is unclear if it is for SNFs as well, but SNF members may want to tune in to determine if it meets your needs)*

According to AHCA, HHS will ship test kits to all ALs with CLIA Certificates of Waiver this week to be used for residents and staff. Kits will also be sent to some SNFs for use with staff. Replenishment of kits will be weekly thereafter with enough kits varying by the county the facility is located in, and based on the CMS ratings for COVID-19 test positivity in that county (red, yellow or green). HHS has also provided a training portal [here](#).

AHCA has also heard that some providers have received an invoice from Abbott. They confirmed with Abbott yesterday that these were sent in error and you do NOT need to pay these invoices. Similarly, some members received information about “shipping specifications” that also include an error that they would be receiving large pallets of test kits. The amount of test kits will be based on estimates of the number of residents and staff you have in your facility and to last you for 1-2 weeks until the next shipment arrives.

National Coronavirus Commission Releases Report on Safety and Quality in Nursing Homes

A new report on the independent [Coronavirus Commission for Safety and Quality in Nursing Homes](#), which was delivered to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) on Sept. 1, 2020.

The final report details the commission’s assessment of the nursing home response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The 186-page report contains 27 principal recommendations and more than 100 accompanying action steps organized into 10 themes: Testing and Screening; Equipment and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); Cohorting; Visitation; Communication; Workforce Ecosystem—Stoppages for Resident Safety; Workforce Ecosystem—Strategic Reinforcement; Technical Assistance and Quality Improvement; Facilities; and Nursing Home Data.

AHCA/NCAL President and CEO Mark Parkinson issued the following statement following the release of the final report:

“We are pleased to see the commission acknowledge what we have been saying from the beginning—there must be shared responsibility with public health officials prioritizing our residents in long term care and helping facilities acquire necessary resources to combat this global pandemic. The commission’s review and findings lay out some of the important work that is needed to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 in nursing homes and further improve the quality of care we deliver.”

Long term and post-acute care providers serving on the commission included Janet Snipes, executive director, Holly Heights Nursing Home, Denver; Neil Pruitt Jr., chairman and CEO, PruittHealth, Norcross, Ga.; **Debra Fournier, RN, chief operations officer, Veterans Homes, Maine**; Penelope Ann Shar, PhD, nursing home resident and advocate, Braintree Manor Healthcare,

Braintree, Mass.; and Camille Rochelle Jordan, RN, senior vice president of clinical operations and innovations, Signature Healthcare, Louisville, Ky. Having completed its tasks, the commission officially concluded on Sept. 1, 2020. Read the report [here](#).

Maine Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program and Disability Rights Maine Offer Workshop on Resident Voting Rights During the Pandemic

Maine LTCOP and DRM have partnered to provide: ***Yes, you can vote! A workshop for residents of long-term care facilities, their families, staff and administrators***

Time: Friday, Sept. 25, 2020 01:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89263655985?pwd=TTBONm15SFBlb1NKaXlrOWx4dVAxUT09>

Meeting ID: 892 6365 5985, Passcode: 675968

One tap mobile +13017158592, 89263655985# US (Germantown)

Or Dial in: +1 646 558 8656 US (New York), Meeting ID: 892 6365 5985

MHCA encourages members to join this free 1 hour workshop to learn about voting rights for residents of long-term care facilities, including those under guardianship. Presenters will review new guidance from Maine's Secretary of State on how to vote safely by absentee ballot during the pandemic. They'll give staff and administrators clear guidelines on appropriate support for residents who may need assistance filling out applications and ballots. They'll discuss your concerns, identify challenges, and offer solutions to support voting access in long-term care facilities.

Presenters:

- Trish Thorsen, LSW, Ombudsman Program Manager, Maine Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program
- Rick Langley, Protection and Advocacy for Voting Access Coordinator, Disability Rights Maine
- Lori Parham, State Director, AARP Maine

Donated Products and Services Available to COVID-19 Frontline Heroes

[Frontline Impact Project](#) matches healthcare workers and first responders with donated non-PPE resources, including snacks, meals, beverages and personal care items. Created by The KIND Foundation, the project has become a primary way for the business community to support the heroes keeping America's communities healthy.

To date, more than 60 corporate partners, including KIND, Unilever, Extra Gum, Nestlé, Keurig, Dr Pepper, Justin's, Hint, Harry's, RISE Brewing Co., and Image Skincare, have donated 3.8 million products. The platform has made 635 matches across 47 states. "We are prepared to support the needs of frontline workers no matter how long it takes for this crisis to pass," says Michael Johnston, President of The KIND Foundation.

Nursing, assisted living, and ID/DD facilities are eligible to receive donations. Visit www.frontlineimpact.org to make a request. If you have questions, please email Jonathan Yates at jyates@lubetzky.org.

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

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