

Hospice and Palliative Care Resources for the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)



NHPCO COVID-19 Update – 01/08/21

NHPCO has created this update for hospice and palliative care providers to share recent news and helpful links. Please note, these Updates are published when there is helpful news to share.

**“No matter how much falls on us, we keep plowing ahead.
That's the only way to keep the roads clear.” – Greg Kincaid**

Provider Update

Updated - New COVID-19 Variants

The CDC has updated [information on new COVID-19 variants](#). Information about the characteristics of these variants is rapidly emerging. Scientists are working to learn more about how easily they might spread, whether they could cause more severe illness, and whether currently authorized vaccines will protect people against them. At this time, there is no evidence that these variants cause more severe illness or increased risk of death.

U.S. Surpasses 300,000 Daily Coronavirus Cases

[The Washington Post](#) (01/08/21) reports alarming increase in COVID-19 cases. The number, which roughly equates to the population of St. Louis, Pittsburgh or Cincinnati, comes about two months after the country reported 100,000 coronavirus cases a day for the first time, and one day after more than 4,000 people died from the virus, also a record. Federal disease trackers said research suggests that people without symptoms transmit more than half of all cases of the [novel coronavirus](#).

FDA COVID-19 Updates

The FDA released [COVID-19 Updates](#) on January 8, 2021. Here are two key highlights.

1. The FDA alerted clinical laboratory staff and health care providers that genetic variants of SARS-CoV-2 may lead to false negative results with molecular tests for SARS-CoV-2. The [Letter to Clinical Laboratory Staff and Health Care Providers](#) includes important information about potential false negative results with molecular tests, including:
 - Details on the effect of genetic variants on test performance.
 - Recommendations for clinical laboratory staff and health care providers.
 - Actions the FDA has taken.
 - Instructions for reporting problems with a test.
2. The FDA posted a new webpage, [Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions](#). Questions cover specifics, such as what data did the FDA review when deciding whether to authorize the vaccine for emergency use, how well the vaccine prevents COVID-19, and more.

Resources

Articles from the *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management*

- “Were Clinical Routines for Good End-of-Life Care Maintained in Hospitals and Nursing Homes During the First Three Months of the Outbreak of COVID-19?” [Read online.](#)
- “Development of a Novel Communication Liaison Program to Support COVID-19 Patients and Their Families,” [read online.](#)

Trust in the Age of COVID-19

An article in the *Journal of Palliative & Supportive Care*, “[Trust in the age of COVID-19](#),” will be of interest to providers. The article reads in part:

In the United States alone, we have almost 17 million COVID-19 cases and more than 300,000 deaths. Brazil has 7 million COVID-19 cases and close to 200,000 deaths. 10 million cases in India with 150,000 deaths. Europe has over 20 million cases and 470,000 deaths. The “Numbers” alone cannot capture the scope and depth of the fear, pain, loss, grief, and trauma of this global human tragedy. The pandemic has exposed many flaws in our civilization’s culture and civil societies: poverty, hunger, and inequity in access to and provision of adequate health care. It has also exposed, in my opinion, profound damage to the basic human moral virtue of “Trust.”

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