

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



NHPCO COVID-19 Update – 02/01/21

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.

"In the middle of a difficulty lies opportunity." — Albert Einstein

Policy Update

PREP Act Declaration to Increase the Workforce of Authorized Vaccinators

[HHS issued a fifth amendment](#) to the Declaration under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act) to add additional categories of qualified persons authorized to prescribe, dispense, and administer COVID-19 vaccines authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Among other things, the amendment:

- Authorizes any health care provider who is licensed or certified in a state to prescribe, dispense, and/or administer COVID-19 vaccines in any other state or U.S. territory.
- Authorizes any physician, registered nurse, or practical nurse whose license or certification expired within the past five years to prescribe, dispense and/or administer COVID-19 vaccines in any state or U.S. territory so long as the license or certification was active and in good standing prior to the date it went inactive.
- Requires any health care professional described above to complete CDC COVID-19 Vaccine Training and, for health care providers who are not currently practicing or whose license or certification is expired, requires an on-site observation period by a currently practicing health care professional.

South African B 1.351 COVID-19 Variant Detected in US

South Carolina reported the [first US cases associated with variant first detected in South Africa](#). CDC is aware that the first US documented cases of the B 1.351 variant of SARS-CoV-2, which was first detected in South Africa, have been identified in South Carolina. CDC is early in its efforts to understand this variant and will continue to provide updates. At this time, there is no evidence that infections by this variant cause more severe disease. CDC's recommendations for slowing the spread—wearing masks, staying at least 6 feet apart from others, avoiding crowds, ventilating indoor spaces, and washing hands often—will also prevent the spread of this variant.

Weekly State Profile Report

The White House COVID-19 Team is publishing a weekly [State Profile Report](#) (SPR) which is generated by the Data Strategy and Execution Workgroup in the Joint Coordination Cell. The White House COVID-19 Team is managed by an interagency team with representatives from multiple agencies and offices (including HHS, CDC, the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, and the Indian Health Service). The COVID-19 State Profile Report provides easily interpretable information on key indicators for a given state. It is a snapshot in time that focuses on recent COVID-19 outcomes in the last seven days and changes relative to the week prior, provides additional contextual information at the county and state levels, and supports rapid visual interpretation of results with color thresholds.

CMS Letter to Governors on Extending Public Health Emergency

Last week, Acting CMS Administrator Norris Cochran released a letter to governors indicating that the Public Health Emergency will likely continue through 2021, and may continue into 2022. The letter was originally reported in *Inside Health Policy* and a [copy of the letter](#) (PDF) was published by Georgetown University's Health Policy Institute.

Provider Updates

Single-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine prevents illness but shows the threat of variants

A single-shot coronavirus vaccine produced by pharmaceutical giant Johnson & Johnson was robustly effective at preventing illness, hospitalizations and deaths in a massive global trial, findings released Friday show. But its protection against sickness was stronger in the United States and weaker in South Africa, where a worrisome coronavirus variant dominates — a complicated result that reflects the evolution of the pandemic. Read more in [the Washington Post](#) (01/29/21).

Why Scientists Are Very Worried About the Variant from Brazil

New coronavirus variants seem to be cropping up everywhere. But for some scientists, the most worrying variant might be the newest one. A variant called P.1, which emerged in early December in Manaus, Brazil, and by mid-January had already caused a massive resurgence in cases across the city of 2 million people. [Read more in NPR](#) (01/27/21).

COVID-19: Novavax Vaccine 'Effective Against UK Variant'

The MHRA is continuing its rolling assessment of the coronavirus vaccine from the US drug company Novavax after the company reported it was effective against the UK variant with an overall efficacy of 89.3%. [Read more in Medscape](#) (01/29/21).

Enroll in V-Safe after Getting COVID-19 Vaccine

The CDC updated their [FAQs about V-safe](#). Once you get a COVID-19 vaccine, you can enroll in v-safe using your smartphone. By participating in v-safe, you can tell CDC if you have any side effects after a COVID-19 vaccine. This information helps CDC monitor the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in near real time. Your health care provider will give you an [information sheet](#) (PDF) on v-safe that explains how to register and get started.

New NIH Database to Track Neurologic Effects of COVID-19

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has launched a database to track COVID-19–related neurologic symptoms, complications, and outcomes as well as the effects of the virus on preexisting neurologic conditions. There is an urgent need to understand COVID-19–related neurological problems, which not uncommonly include headaches, fatigue, cognitive difficulties, stroke, pain, and sleep disorders as well as some very rare complications of serious infections. [Read more in Medscape](#) (01/29/21).

Resources

FDA Update

- The FDA added a new FAQ, “Can the FDA help me get a COVID-19 vaccine,” to its [COVID-19 FAQs](#), under the vaccine section. The answer is no. The FDA’s authority includes authorizing or approving COVID-19 vaccines for use in the United States. The FDA is not responsible for vaccine distribution. [Go to the CDC](#)

[website](#) to find your state and local health departments who are responsible for COVID-19 vaccine distribution. If anyone is contacted directly by someone who says they are from the FDA about a COVID-19 vaccine appointment, it is a scam.

- As part of the FDA's effort to protect consumers, the agency issued warning letters jointly with the Federal Trade Commission to [Allimax Us](#) and to [AusarHerbs](#) for selling unapproved products with fraudulent COVID-19 claims.
- The FDA placed all alcohol-based hand sanitizers from Mexico on a country-wide import alert to help prevent entry of violative and potentially dangerous products from entering the U.S. until the agency is able to review the product's safety.

Read the [full FDA update](#) (01/29/21) online.

Experts Talking to Communities about COVID-19

TD Jakes Hosts "In Conversations with America: Understanding the COVID-19 Vaccine"

To better inform the Black/African American community about the coronavirus vaccine, Bishop T.D. Jakes of Dallas' Potters House brought in Dr. Anthony Fauci, Dr. Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett and others to online event this past week. View the [recording on YouTube](#).

Harmonizing the Spiritual and Scientific Worldviews

The Religion, Spirituality, and Health Scientific Interest Group will host Dr. Francis S. Collins as their inaugural presenter on Tuesday, February 9 at 2:00 p.m. EST. This event is free and open to the public. Questions for the presenter may be submitted in advance to RSH-SIG@nih.gov. Visit the [NIH website to watch](#).

A Conversation on COVID-19 with Dr. Fauci and the Muslim Community

American Muslim Health Professionals (AMHP) will host this conversation with Dr. Anthony Fauci, NIAID Director and Chief Medical Advisor on COVID-19 to President Biden on Thursday, February 11 at 1:30 p.m. ET. [Register to join the webinar](#).

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