

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



NHPCO COVID-19 Update – 02/03/21

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

Policy Updates

White House Announces COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery Directly to Pharmacies

The Biden administration announced that it will begin delivering COVID-19 vaccines directly to pharmacies in addition to the vaccines that have been allotted to states, territories and tribes. The [White House Fact Sheet](#) (02/02/21) provides more detail. The Administration's COVID-19 team announced that they will ship roughly one million doses per week to approximately 6,500 pharmacies across the US. The shipments will increase as supply permits, according to Jeff Zients, Biden's coronavirus response coordinator, but "due to current supply constraints, this will be limited when it begins next week." Pharmacies include CVS, Walgreens, Rite Aid, Walmart and Costco, as well as networks of independent operators. Not all of the chains will immediately be taking part in every state, the White House said.

White House Tells Hospitals to Start Using Up Backlog of Vaccine

The Biden administration is advising health care providers across the country against holding back doses of COVID-19 vaccines, amid reports that hospitals are reserving limited supply to ensure that patients receive doses. Andy Slavitt, a senior adviser to the White House's COVID response team, said providers should be confident that there will be a steady supply of doses and that stockpiling "does not need to happen and should not happen." [Read more in Kaiser Health News](#) (02/02/21).

Provider Updates

Fauci Says CDC May Recommend Wearing Two Masks

The CDC may recommend wearing two masks, one over the other, to keep the new, more contagious variants of the coronavirus at bay, according to the top US infectious diseases chief Anthony Fauci. The CDC and Fauci discussed the option on Monday February 1, but the agency does not yet have the data to make any formal recommendation. During a Washington Post event, Fauci said "it makes common sense" to increase protection. [Read more in the New York Post](#) (02/02/21).

U.S. Hits Pandemic Milestone With More Vaccinated Than Cases

More Americans have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine than have tested positive for the virus. As of 2/1/21, 26.5 million Americans had received one or both doses of the current vaccines, according to data compiled by the Bloomberg Vaccine Tracker. Since the first U.S. patient tested positive outside of Seattle a year

ago, 26.3 million people in the country have tested positive for the disease, and 443,000 have died, according to data from Johns Hopkins University. [Read more in Bloomberg \(02/01/21\)](#).

US COVID-19 vaccine distribution will 'get better very quickly'

Dr. Anthony Fauci vowed Monday evening that US COVID-19 vaccine distribution will "get better very quickly" as the Biden administration rolls out a series of measures aimed at ramping up inoculation. Biden has sought to boost US vaccinations through a series of measures, including the purchase of 200 million more vaccine doses and increased distribution to states by millions of doses. With those additional doses, Biden said there would be enough to fully vaccinate 300 million Americans -- nearly the entire US population -- by the end of summer or early fall. He described efforts to combat COVID-19 as a "wartime undertaking" last week. [Read more on CNN \(02/01/21\)](#).

AI tool predicts respiratory risks in COVID-19 patients

Researchers at Northwell's Feinstein Institutes for Medical Research have developed an AI-powered predictive tool they say can assess patients for their risk of respiratory failure within 48 hours. [Read more in Healthcare IT News \(01/29/21\)](#).

Resources

NHPCO's Government Funding Webinar #3: Provider Relief Fund Use and Reporting

NHPCO is offering this webinar on **February 18, 2021, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. ET**. This free webinar, available to all, will provide attendees with long-awaited details about the use and reporting of Provider Relief Funds to HHS. The Provider Relief Fund portal opened on January 15, 2021, and HHS has now released additional guidance and clarifications about the reporting process -- what can be included in lost revenue, expenses to be included and calculations for the report. HHS has not yet released the deadline for Provider Relief Fund reporting. [Register for Government Funding Webinar #3 online](#).

NASEM Webinar: Lessons from COVID-19 Pandemic

Join the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine's webinar, *Caring for People with Serious Illness in the Home: Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic*, on **Tuesday, February 16 from 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. ET**. The webinar will cover providing palliative care and hospice in the home, strategies to reach rural communities, and policy considerations. Speakers include NHPCO's Lori Bishop, Vice President of Palliative and Advanced Care, and Hannah Yang Moore, Chief Advocacy Officer. [Register for the webinar online](#).

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