

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



NHPCO COVID-19 Update – 02/12/21

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

HHS Announces Liability Protections for Federal Employees and Volunteers Giving Vaccines

In the sixth amendment to the [Declaration Under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act for Medical Countermeasures Against COVID-19](#), HHS will extend liability protections to any federal government employee, contractor or volunteer who prescribes, administers, delivers, distributes or dispenses a covered countermeasure, including COVID-19 vaccines. The announcement will be published in the Federal Register on February 16.

Johnson & Johnson CEO: Vaccine Doses May Be Needed Annually for Several Years

[The Hill reports](#), “Johnson & Johnson CEO Alex Gorsky said people may be getting COVID-19 vaccines annually for the next several years. Gorsky made the comment at a CNBC event on Tuesday after he was asked if he felt that post-pandemic vaccines would be needed, specifically if people would require updated COVID-19 vaccines every year, similar to the flu.”

Americans' Willingness to Get COVID-19 Vaccines Reaches Record High

Americans may be more willing than ever to get their COVID-19 shot, according to a new survey from Gallup. Since Gallup first began polling Americans on their willingness in July 2020, there was an initial decline in willingness to get a COVID-19 vaccine, reaching a low of 50% in September. Since then, there has been a steady climb to 65% willing in late December, and now, an all-time high of 71% who are willing to get vaccinated. Read the story on the [ABC News website](#).

Over 30 Percent of Americans Say They Won't Get COVID-19 Vaccine

[The Hill reports](#), “Nearly 1 in 3 people in the United States said that they definitely or probably will not get the COVID-19 vaccine, according to a new survey. The poll, released Wednesday by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, found that 15 percent of survey respondents said they will ‘definitely’ not get a coronavirus vaccine. Seventeen percent said that they will ‘probably not’ get the inoculation.”

White House Considers Domestic COVID-19 Travel Restrictions

The Biden administration is weighing whether to implement travel restrictions within the U.S. as coronavirus variants emerge, particularly in Florida. Any travel restrictions or new public health measures would be discussed among officials at the federal, state and local levels, the Herald reported. In January, President Joe Biden directed the CDC, the Department of Transportation and the Department of Homeland Security to draft a list of recommendations for how their agencies might impose additional public health measures on domestic travel. Read more on the [Medscape website](#).

Provider Updates

Vaccinating Homebound Persons With COVID-19 Vaccine

COVID-19 vaccination of homebound persons presents unique challenges to ensure the appropriate vaccine storage temperatures, handling, and administration to ensure safe and effective vaccination.

Homebound person include those that need the help of another person or medical equipment such as crutches, a walker, or a wheelchair to leave their home, or their medical provider believes that their health or illness could get worse if they leave their home, and they typically do not leave their home. [Learn more on the CDC website.](#)

Selected Adverse Events Reported after COVID-19 Vaccination

Results from monitoring efforts are reassuring. Some people have no side effects. Many people have reported only mild side effects after COVID-19 vaccination. [Visit the CDC website for more information.](#)

Articles of Interest from *The Washington Post* (subscription may be required)

- [More contagious British coronavirus variant set to ‘sweep the world,’ top scientist says](#) (02/11/21) The coronavirus variant first discovered in southeast England is probably “going to sweep the world” and could prolong efforts to beat the virus for at least another decade, the head of Britain’s genomic surveillance program said Thursday.
- [U.S. secures enough vaccine for 300 million people by the end of July](#) (0/11/21) The Biden administration on Thursday purchased another 200 million doses of the two [coronavirus](#) vaccines authorized for emergency use in the United States, securing sufficient shots by the end of July to cover everyone currently eligible for inoculation.

Resources

Two Articles from the *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management*

- [Witnesses and Victims Both: Healthcare Workers and Grief in the Time of COVID-19](#) (JPSM, Feb 2021) COVID-19 grief is occurring in the setting of incomplete grief, disenfranchised grief, fractured US governmental leadership, and evidence of great mistrust, systemic racism, and social injustice. In the intensity and pervasiveness of COVID-19, HCW fears for themselves, their colleagues, and their own loved ones are often in conflict with professional commitments.
- [Palliative Care in Toronto during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) (JPSM, Feb 2021) This article explores the effects of the pandemic on Toronto's palliative care planning and reports of clinical load and capacity, beds, staffing and redeployment, and medication and PPE shortages. The Toronto palliative care experience illustrates the international need for strategies to ensure the integration of palliative care into COVID-19 management, and to optimize the use of palliative care systems during the pandemic.

-###-