

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



NHPCO COVID-19 Update – 05/26/21

To Our COVID-19 Update Readers: Moving forward, NHPCO will publish the Update once a week on Wednesdays. However, if there is breaking news of importance to the provider community, we will communicate that as needed. To all those who have been reading our Update, the team from NHPCO offers our appreciation.

“To handle yourself, use your head; to handle others, use your heart.” — Eleanor Roosevelt

Policy Update

OCR Provides Technical Assistance to the State of Arizona to Ensure Crisis Standards of Care Protect Against Age and Disability Discrimination

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has resolved a complaint against the State of Arizona involving its crisis standards of care ("CSC") guidelines. The complaint was brought by the Arizona Center for Disability Law, the Arc of Arizona, the Arizona Center for Law in the Public Interest, the Native American Disability Law Center, and a number of national and local disability and aging advocacy groups. OCR provided technical assistance and used a collaborative process to revise the State of Arizona's guidelines to reflect legal requirements and best practices regarding the needs of people with disabilities and older adults. This effort builds on OCR's continuing work to ensure non-discrimination during COVID-19. Learn more on the [HHS website](#).

Provider Update

Big Gaps in Vaccine Rates Across the US Worry Health Experts

An article from the Associated Press reports, “A month after every adult in the U.S. became eligible for the vaccine, a distinct geographic pattern has emerged: The highest vaccination rates are concentrated in the Northeast, while the lowest ones are mostly in the South. Experts say the gap reflects a multitude of factors, including political leanings, religious beliefs, and education and income levels. Eight Southern states are in the bottom 10, all of which are under 40%. Mississippi was dead last at 32%, followed by Louisiana, Alabama, Wyoming, Idaho, Tennessee, Arkansas, Georgia, West Virginia and South Carolina. Closing the gaps is vital to controlling the virus that has killed 588,000 people in the U.S., health experts say.” Read the article on the [Medscape website](#).

Covid-19 Vaccine Boosters may be Necessary

[CNN reports](#), “Researchers and health officials suspect that the immunity against Covid-19 these vaccines elicit in the body might wane over long periods of time -- say, possibly, after a year or more -- and might not protect as well against coronavirus variants that could emerge and evolve. herefore, a vaccinated person might need a booster dose of vaccine to stay protected against the original coronavirus strain and newly emerging variants -- somewhat similar to how a tetanus booster is recommended every 10 years or different flu vaccines are recommended each year.”

FDA Updates:

- The FDA issued a [safety communication](#) to remind health care providers and the public that results from currently authorized SARS-CoV-2 antibody tests should not be used to evaluate a person's level of immunity or protection from COVID-19 at any time, and especially after the person received a COVID-19 vaccination. The FDA also updated the [Serology/Antibody Tests: FAQs on Testing for SARS-CoV-2](#) and the [Antibody \(Serology\) Testing for COVID-19: Information for Patients and Consumers](#) web pages to provide updated information on the use of SARS-CoV-2 antibody test results.
- As part of the FDA's effort to protect consumers, on May 19, 2021, the agency [issued a warning letter jointly with the Federal Trade Commission](#) to BGP, LLC for selling an unapproved product with unproven COVID-19 claims. Consumers concerned about COVID-19 should consult with their health care provider. <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-may-21-2021>
- The FDA updated its guidance, [Emergency Use Authorization for Vaccines to Prevent COVID-19](#), to include a new section that clarifies how the agency intends to prioritize review of EUA requests for the remainder of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

FEMA Updates

Visit the FEMA website to learn more about:

- [FEMA Updates State-Specific Funeral Assistance Information](#)
- [FEMA Hosts Webinar on Funding for Community Engagement About COVID-19 Vaccinations](#)

RESOURCES

2021 APIAHF Health Equity Awards

Come join the Asian Pacific Islander American Health Forum to celebrate 35 years of advancing health equity on Thursday, May 27 at 6:00 p.m. ET. [RSVP to join](#) the awards presentation. The event will be streaming on Facebook and YouTube Live, as well.

Mental Health Crises of the Families of COVID-19 Victims: a qualitative study

An open access article from the journal, [BMC Family Practice](#), reports, "The families of COVID-19 deceased victims are affected by various psychological crises which have exposed them to a deep sense of loss and emotional shock. Therefore, there is an urgent need for a cultural context which recognizes and supports all the various aspects of the mental health of these families."

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Registration is now open for the [2021 Virtual Conference](#). Register by June 14 to get the early-bird rate!