

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



NHPCO COVID-19 Update – 06/30/21

NHPCO publishes the COVID-19 Update once a week on Wednesdays. Should there be breaking news of importance to the provider community, we will communicate that as needed.

"Out of difficulties grow miracles." – Jean de la Bruyere

Policy Updates

FEMA Amends COVID-19 Funeral Assistance Policy

FEMA is amending the agency's [COVID-19 funeral assistance policy](#) to assist with COVID-19 related fatalities that occurred in the early months of the pandemic. This policy change will allow applicants to submit a statement or letter from the death certificate's certifying official, medical examiner, or coroner that attributes the death to COVID-19 fatalities that occurred between Jan. 20 and May 16, 2020.

Provider Update

Delta Variant is 'Greatest Threat' to Ending COVID-19 Pandemic

The [Ladders website](#) shares an article, "White House chief medical advisor Dr. Anthony Fauci said Tuesday that the Delta variant of COVID-19, which first emerged in India, is quickly becoming a problem in the US. It is now the 'greatest threat' to ending COVID-19 in the US and accounts for roughly 20% of newly diagnosed cases in the country — twice as many as we had on June 5. But there's good news, too: 'Our vaccines are effective against the Delta variant,' he said."

U.S. COVID-19 Cases Rise, Likely Due to Delta Variant

An article from the [University of Minnesota CIDRAP](#) reports, "After weeks of substantial decreases, COVID-19 cases are beginning to rise again in the United States, likely due to infections caused by the highly transmissible Delta variant (B.1.6.17.2). The increase is seen most prominently in Southern and Western states, and communities with low vaccination rates. According to data from the Washington Post, new daily cases in the United States have risen by 14.8% over the past 7 days, with significant increases in Nevada (55%), Wyoming (18%), Missouri (20%), and Arkansas (55%). New daily deaths still fell by 0.7% over the past week, and COVID-related hospitalizations fell by 4.7%."

CDC Says There Isn't Enough Data to Recommend COVID Booster

[CNBC reports](#), "A group of CDC scientists said Wednesday that currently there isn't enough data to support recommending Covid-19 booster shots to the general population but that more-vulnerable groups, such as elderly people or transplant recipients, may need an extra dose. The Covid-19 working group of the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices didn't rule out the possibility that the general population eventually may need booster shots if immunity from the vaccines wanes or a variant reduces the effectiveness of current shots."

FDA Update

The [FDA is announcing revisions](#) to the patient and provider fact sheets for the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines regarding the suggested increased risks of myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle) and pericarditis (inflammation of the tissue surrounding the heart) following vaccination. For each vaccine, the Fact Sheet for Healthcare Providers Administering Vaccine (Vaccination Providers) has been revised to include a warning about myocarditis and pericarditis and the Fact Sheet for Recipients and Caregivers has been revised to include information about myocarditis and pericarditis.

Moral Distress, Palliative Care, and the Road to Resilience

An article by Larry Beresford examines the challenges the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to healthcare professionals, particularly in areas where case numbers surged. Read this article on the [AAHPM website](#).

Resources

COVID Caused Biggest Drop in U.S. Life Expectancy Since World War II

[HealthDay News reports](#), "The COVID-19 pandemic triggered the largest decline in U.S. life expectancy since World War II, a new study finds. Between 2018 and 2020, overall life expectancy in the United States fell by 1.87 years. But there were significant racial differences. Life expectancy fell 1.36 years among whites, 3.25 years among Blacks and 3.88 years among Hispanics, researchers say. The decrease in life expectancy in the United States was 8.5 times higher than the average in a comparison group of 16 other wealthy nations. And the declines among U.S. minority populations were 15 to 18 times larger than in those other countries."

Black and Hispanic Americans Suffer Most in Biggest U.S. Decline in Life Expectancy

[Kaiser Health News](#) reports, "With coronavirus infections falling in the U.S., many people are eager to put the pandemic behind them. But it has inflicted wounds that won't easily heal. In addition to killing 600,000 in the United States and afflicting an estimated 3.4 million or more with persistent symptoms, the pandemic threatens the health of vulnerable people devastated by the loss of jobs, homes and opportunities for the future. It will, almost certainly, cast a long shadow on American health, leading millions of people to live sicker and die younger due to increasing rates of poverty, hunger and housing insecurity."

COVID-19: Disaster Preparedness and Vulnerable Populations: A Workshop Series

This virtual workshop offered by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine will be held over two remaining webinars. On July 1, the second webinar will focus on home health workers who provide services to individuals living with disabilities and older adults. On July 15, the third webinar will consider the needs of individuals living with disabilities and older adults and efforts to include these populations in disaster planning. [Register online](#).

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It's one month until the [2021 Virtual Conference](#). Register today and join others from across the country who will be focusing on healthcare transformation.