

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



NHPCO COVID-19 Update – 07/21/21

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.

"The most pressing ethical question is to make sure that everything you do from a scientific standpoint is done for the ultimate good and positive issue for the people that you're caring about."

– Anthony Fauci

Policy Updates

Renewal of COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

On July 19, 2021, Secretary Xavier Becerra, Secretary of Health and Human Services, [renewed the PHE for COVID-19](#). The renewal is for three months. As a reminder to hospice providers, the renewal of the COVID-19 PHE also means that the 1135 waivers in place during the PHE will remain in place. Several of the waivers allow a time frame after the expiration of the PHE to have the task completed. Unless otherwise specified, the waivers will end when the PHE expires. The CMS complete list (updated 5/24/2021) can be found on the CMS website. NHPCO members may [download a Regulatory Alert](#) (07/20/21) from the NHPCO website that outlines the waivers that affect hospice.

Surgeon General: 'I am worried about what is to come'

Surgeon General Vivek Murthy on Sunday said he is “worried about what is to come” in the COVID-19 pandemic as cases increase throughout the U.S., primarily among those who are not vaccinated. “I am worried about what is to come because we are seeing increasing cases among the unvaccinated in particular. And while if you are vaccinated you are very well protected against hospitalization and death, unfortunately that is not true if you are not vaccinated,” Murthy told host Dana Bash on CNN’s “State of the Union.” Read more in [The Hill](#).

Surgeon General Says Local Mask Mandates a Good Idea as Delta Surges

[The Washington Post](#) reports, “U.S. Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy said that he supports individual counties reinstating mask mandates to combat local surges of the coronavirus among unvaccinated people — like Los Angeles County did last week — as the pathogen’s highly contagious delta variant drives a spike in infections and the Biden administration seeks to project a sense of cautious optimism about the country’s return to normalcy. Murthy said such local orders are consistent with federal guidelines that permit local authorities to require prevention measures.” (*Subscription may be required.*)

Provider Update

CDC Updates Guidance - Families with Vaccinated and Unvaccinated Members

The CDC has updated their guidance for the public related to Families with Vaccinated and Unvaccinated Members. Learn more on the [CDC website](#).

'Dealing With a Different Beast': Why Delta Has Doctors Worried

[Medscape Medical News](#) reports, "Research from the United Kingdom shows that Delta is highly contagious. It's about 60% more easily passed from person to person than the Alpha version (or B.1.1.7, which was first identified in the United Kingdom). Where a single infected person might have spread older versions of the virus to two or three others, mathematician and epidemiologist Adam Kucharski, PhD, an associate professor at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, thinks that number — called the basic reproduction number — might be around six for Delta, meaning that, on average, each infected person spreads the virus to six others."

COVID-19 May Be 'Long Haul' Challenge in U.S.

An [article from UPI](#) reports, "The rise of new COVID-19 variants and the growing number of people with "long-haul" symptoms of the coronavirus suggest it likely will remain a health challenge in the United States for years. Infection rates in much of the country are at their lowest levels since April of last year. But many regions, particularly in the Midwest, are reporting COVID-19 outbreaks, largely fueled by the Delta variant that originated in India, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention."

Children and COVID: Vaccinations Drop as Case Count Rises

"Just under 25% of children aged 12-15 had completed the vaccine regimen as of July 12, and just over one-third (33.5%) had received at least one dose. New cases of COVID-19, however, were on the rise in children. The 19,000 new cases reported for the week ending July 8 were up from 12,000 a week earlier and 8,000 the week before that, according to a report from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Children's Hospital Association. That report also shows that children made up 22.3% of all new cases during the week of July 2-8, compared with 16.8% the previous week, and that there were nine deaths in children that same week, the most since March. COVID-related deaths among children total 344 in the 46 jurisdictions (43 states, New York City, Puerto Rico, and Guam) that are reporting such data by age." Read more from [Medscape Medical News](#).

Resources

Religion and COVID-19: Adaption, Problems, and Benefits

"COVID-19 has changed the world in many ways and it has come to have significant relevance to religion, and this leads us to inquire as to how religion has responded and adapted under the circumstances: How have religions and religious persons attempted to make sense of the virus? How have religions responded to the virus? And does religion facilitate or hinder the adherence to public health measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19? These are but a few of many important questions scholars are asking and that this essay will offer answers to." Read more in this [article on the James Bishop Blog](#).

Supporting Indian and other South Asians facing COVID-19

Read this article from the [Journal of Pain and Symptom Management](#), "Supporting Indian and other South Asians facing COVID-19 and other serious illnesses."

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Eight days until the [2021 Virtual Conference](#) that will focus on healthcare transformation. A timely topic given the experience of the past year. There is still plenty of time to register.