

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



NHPCO COVID-19 Update – 09/22/21

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.

*“Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.”
– Mahatma Gandhi*

Policy Updates

CDC to Invest \$2.1 Billion to Protect Patients and Healthcare Workers

The Biden-Harris Administration announced a \$2.1 billion investment to improve infection prevention and control activities across the U.S. public health and healthcare sectors. The Biden-Harris Administration, working through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is investing American Rescue Plan funding to strengthen and equip state, local, and territorial public health departments and other partner organizations with the resources needed to better fight infections in U.S. healthcare facilities, including COVID-19 and other known and emerging infectious diseases. [Read the press release](#) on the CDC website.

COVID-19 Scenario Modeling Hub Predicts Outlook for the Pandemic in the Next Six Months

The [COVID-19 Scenario Modeling Hub](#) issued predictions which combined nine different mathematical models from different research groups to get an outlook for the pandemic for the next six months. "Any of us who have been following this closely, given what happened with delta, are going to be really cautious about too much optimism," says Justin Lessler at the University of North Carolina, who helps run the hub. "But I do think that the trajectory is towards improvement for most of the country," he says. The most likely scenario, says Lessler, is that children do get vaccinated and no super-spreading variant emerges. In that case, the combo model forecasts that new infections would slowly, but fairly continuously, drop from about 140,000 today now to about 9,000 a day by March 2022. Deaths from COVID-19 would fall from about 1,500 a day now to fewer than 100 a day by March 2022.

HHS Readout of the MassChallenge 2022 Launch Event

On Thursday, September 9, 2021 Assistant Secretary for Health Rachel L. Levine, M.D., and National Coordinator for Health Information Technology Micky Tripathi helped kick off the PandemicX Accelerator Program during the virtual MassChallenge 2022 Verticals Application Launch event. PandemicX is a startup accelerator sponsored by HHS and run by MassChallenge HealthTech (MCHT). PandemicX combines entrepreneurs and digital tools with the infrastructure and data of HHS to better understand and eliminate disparities in access and quality of care exacerbated by COVID-19. [Learn more about MassChallenge](#).

FDA Updates

- The [FDA issued a revised guidance](#), *Enforcement Policy for Face Masks, Barrier Face Coverings, Face Shields, Surgical Masks, and Respirators During the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Public Health Emergency (Revised)*, to help expand the availability of face masks, barrier face coverings

and face shields for the general public, including health care personnel, as well as surgical masks and particulate filtering facepiece respirators (FFRs) (including N95 respirators) for health care personnel for the duration of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

- The FDA revised the [Emergency Use Authorization](#) (EUA) for bamlanivimab and etesevimab, administered together, to include an emergency use as post-exposure prophylaxis (prevention) for COVID-19 in adults and pediatric patients (12 years of age and older weighing at least 40 kilograms) who are at high risk for progression to severe COVID-19, including hospitalization or death.

Provider Update

COVID is Officially America's Deadliest Pandemic

[CNBC reports](#), "Covid-19 is officially the deadliest outbreak in recent American history, surpassing the estimated U.S. fatalities from the 1918 influenza pandemic, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University. Reported U.S. deaths due to Covid crossed 675,000 on Monday and are rising at an average of more than 1,900 fatalities per day, Johns Hopkins data shows. The nation is currently experiencing yet another wave of new infections, fueled by the fast-spreading delta variant."

WHO Reports Big Drop in New Coronavirus Infections

[ABC News reports](#), "The World Health Organization said there were about 4 million coronavirus cases reported globally last week, marking the first major drop in new infections in more than two months. In recent weeks, there have been about 4.4 million new COVID-19 cases."

Modelers Predict a Steady Decline in COVID Cases Through March

"The delta surge appears to be peaking nationally, and cases and deaths will likely decline steadily now through the spring without a significant winter surge, according to a new analysis shared with NPR by a consortium of researchers advising the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention." Visit the [NPR website](#) to learn more.

Two Dose Version of Johnson & Johnson Shot 94% Effective Against COVID-19

"A two-dose version of Johnson & Johnson's coronavirus vaccine provides 94% protection against symptomatic infection, the company said Tuesday -- making a two-dose regimen of J&J's Janssen vaccine comparable to a two-dose regimen of Moderna's or Pfizer's. Plus, the company said, adding a booster dose to a single shot of the vaccine raised immunity even more, and should also protect people strongly against infection." Read the [article from CNN](#).

CDC: It's Safe to Get COVID, Flu Vaccines at Same Time

[WebMD reports](#), "When the CDC released its latest round of recommendations regarding seasonal flu vaccines, the agency made one notable update: Flu vaccines and COVID-19 vaccines can now be given simultaneously. The guidance is a marked change from previous agency recommendations, which said that other vaccinations should not be administered within a 2-week window before or after the COVID-19 vaccine."

Study Warns of ‘Inequitable’ End-of-life Care for Minority Groups During COVID-19

A study out of King’s College in London and featured in an [article from *Nursing Times*](#) reports, “National policies introduced in the wake of Covid-19 may have negatively affected people from minority ethnic backgrounds at the end of life more so than others, new research has found. The study, led by King’s College London, gathered information from 277 palliative care services across the UK through an online survey, conducted during the first wave of the pandemic.”

COVID-19 Pandemic Shortens Aggregate U.S. Life Expectancy

“Researchers estimated that the COVID-19 pandemic shortened aggregate U.S. life expectancy by more than 9 million years, and Black and Hispanic individuals lost more than twice as many quality-adjusted life years per capita than white individuals. The results, published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*, indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic led to an estimated 6.62 million quality-adjusted life years lost (about 9.08 million years of life lost) from March 22, 2020, through March 13, 2021, and that 54% of those years were lost among adults aged 25 to 64 years. The impact was the greatest on Black and Hispanic men aged 65 years and older, who lost 1,138 and 1,371 quality-adjusted life years, respectively, for every 10,000 individuals.” Read the [full article on the Healio website](#).

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