

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



NHPCO COVID-19 Update – 10/05/20

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.

“Challenges are what make life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful.”
– Joshua J. Marine

Policy Update

Secretary Azar Extends Public Health Emergency

On the afternoon of Friday, October 2, 2020, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar announced that he had renewed the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency declaration. This renewal will be effective October 23, 2020 and will extend current Public Health Emergency flexibilities another 90 days from that date.

Negotiations over COVID-19 Relief Package Continue

According to [reporting from Politico](#) yesterday, with President Trump in Walter Reed National Military Medical Center with COVID-19, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin is under pressure to make a deal on a new COVID-19 relief package. The Administration is eager to show that the president is hard at work, and the president himself has tweeted from the hospital calling for a stimulus deal. Nonetheless, negotiations between Secretary Mnuchin and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi have made little progress. The parties continue to disagree about the size of a COVID-19 package. Pelosi favors a price tag of around \$2 trillion. On Thursday, House Democrats passed a \$2.2 trillion package. The White House supports a package costing closer to \$1 trillion, and negotiations continue about such essential elements as state and local funding, and enhanced unemployment benefits. As of now, the House will not be in session until after the November election, and the Senate will not be back in session until October 19th. If there is movement on a pending deal, we will report on it.

Provider Update

COVID-19 Can Sometimes be Spread by Airborne Transmission (CDC Update)

The CDC updated their [“How COVID-19 Spreads”](#) webpage on 10/5/20 stating there is evidence that under certain conditions, people with COVID-19 seem to have infected others who were more than 6 feet away. These transmissions occurred within enclosed spaces that had inadequate ventilation.

Changing Age Distribution of the COVID-19 Pandemic

[The CDC reports](#) that during June–August 2020, COVID-19 incidence was highest in persons aged 20–29 years, who accounted for >20% of all confirmed cases. Younger adults likely contribute to community transmission of COVID-19. Across the southern United States in June 2020, increases in percentage of positive SARS-CoV-2 test results among adults aged 20–39 years preceded increases among those aged ≥60 years by 4–15 days.

Resources

New Tools from ELNEC

- [ELNEC COVID-19 Communication Resource Guide](#)
Advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) are having to notify family members of patients with COVID-19 about the patient's death by telephone. This can be quite difficult if the APRN is not comfortable making the call. This educational tool guides the APRN through preparing for the call, making the call, delivering the news, and closing the call. Helpful tips for supporting the family are included.
- [ELNEC Final Hours- Adapted for COVID-19 Crisis](#)
Patients and families need us to be fully present- even when we have to be wearing PPE and respecting social distancing. During these challenging times, it is so important that we use our strong communication skills to help support patients and families, especially those facing the end of life.

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