

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



NHPCO COVID-19 Update – 11/17/21

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.

"Believe you can and you're halfway there."

– Theodore Roosevelt

Policy Updates

FDA Updates Policies to Help to Ensure Accuracy and Reliability of Tests, Increase Access to At-Home Tests

The FDA is taking several important actions to support ongoing nationwide COVID-19 testing efforts. This is aimed at further increasing access to accurate and reliable COVID-19 tests, particularly diagnostic tests that can be performed at home or in places like doctor's offices, hospitals, urgent care centers and emergency rooms without having to be sent to a central lab for testing. Read the latest updates in the [FDA news release](#).

HHS Announces \$143.5 Million to Expand Community-Based Efforts to Address Vaccination Barriers

The US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), announced \$143.5 million in American Rescue Plan funding to expand community-based efforts to conduct tailored local outreach about vaccines, build vaccine confidence and address barriers to vaccination in their communities. [Read more from HHS](#).

Pfizer Seeks Emergency Authorization for its Coronavirus-Fighting Pill Regimen

"Pharmaceutical giant Pfizer requested emergency authorization Tuesday for its five-day antiviral pill regimen, Paxlovid, making it the second easy-to-take treatment aimed at keeping newly infected people out of the hospital to go before the Food and Drug Administration. Pfizer's submission came shortly after the company announced that the clinical trial testing the drug regimen had been halted early due to overwhelming evidence that it worked. When Paxlovid was given to people at high risk of severe illness within three days of symptom onset, it reduced the rate of death and hospitalization by 89 percent compared with people given a placebo," reports [The Washington Post](#).

Provider Updates

What Data on 4.3 million Patients Shows about Racial Disparities Amid the Pandemic

[Becker's Hospital Review](#) shares information on recent study published by JAMA Open Network, "Racial and ethnic minorities are at an increased risk for COVID-19 infection and severity, but at lower risks for death, a study published Nov. 11 in JAMA Open Network found. Researchers performed a systematic review and meta-analysis of 4.3 million patients from 68 studies from Jan. 1, 2020, to Jan. 6, 2021." Among the key findings: "In an analysis

adjusted for age and sex, Black and Hispanic Americans were most likely to contract COVID-19 and Asian Americans were at highest risk for ICU admission."

About Half of U.S. States Record Rising COVID-19 Cases

New COVID-19 diagnoses are up in about half of U.S. states over the past week. Hospitalizations are up in 11 states, and deaths have risen in 17 states. While new cases have fallen in some states, they're rising in others, particularly some regions' cold-weather states, [CNN reports](#).

U.S. COVID Cases Need to Fall Below 10,000 a Day to Get to a 'Degree of Normality'

COVID-19 cases in the U.S. need to fall "well below 10,000" per day for the country to achieve some semblance of pre-pandemic life, per White House chief medical advisor Dr. Anthony Fauci. COVID cases in the U.S. plateaued at between 70,000 and 75,000 per day for almost three weeks before starting to rise again toward the end of last week. The more-contagious delta variant will thrive if COVID cases remain elevated, affecting both unvaccinated people and vaccinated people with waning immunity, Fauci said. [Read more from CNBC](#).

Long-Term Study of Children with COVID-19 Begins

A large, long-term study of the impacts of COVID-19 on children has enrolled its first participant at the National Institutes of Health's Clinical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. The study, which is supported by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the National Institutes of Health, will track up to 1,000 children and young adults who previously tested positive for COVID-19 and evaluate the impact of COVID-19 on their physical and mental health over three years. [Read more in the NIH news release](#).

Nationwide Study on Susceptibility of Patients on Dialysis to COVID-19

Patients on dialysis are known to be at notably higher risk of contracting SARS-CoV-2 and dying from COVID-19 than the general population, and now, for the first time, a large nationwide study pinpoints further specific risk factors for infection and mortality in this population, which in fact, are broadly similar to those in the general population. [Read more from Medscape](#) (*note, a subscription may be needed to access this content.*)

Delta Dominates the World, but Scientists Watch for Worrisome Offspring

The World Health Organization classifies Delta as a variant of concern, a category that means the variant is capable of increasing transmissibility, causing more severe disease or reducing the benefit of vaccines and treatments. Given Delta's global dominance, many vaccine experts now believe that all future variants will be offshoots of Delta. [Read more from Medscape](#).

Resources

COVID-19 Vaccine Emergency Use Instructions Resources

On November 17, 2021, CDC issued [Emergency Use Instructions](#) (PDF) to provide information about use of the formulation of the COVID-19 vaccine by Pfizer-BioNTech which is approved (licensed) by the FDA for the prevention of COVID-19 in individuals 16 years of age and older.