

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



NHPCO COVID-19 Update – 12/15/21

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.

“A problem is a chance for you to do your best.” – Duke Ellington

Provider Update

U.S. COVID Death Toll Eclipses 800,000 as Winter Surge Intensifies

[ABC News reports](#), “On Tuesday, the United States reached yet another staggering milestone, with 800,000 Americans now confirmed lost to the coronavirus, according to newly updated data from Johns Hopkins University... The sobering marker comes less than two years into the pandemic, and despite the introduction of the first coronavirus vaccines, nearly one year ago.”

CDC Data Indicate Omicron is Starting to Eat into Delta’s U.S. Dominance

[STAT reports](#), “The new variant accounted for 2.9% of sequenced Covid-19 cases in the United States in the week ending Dec. 11. The week before, 0% of cases were from Omicron. Delta accounted for essentially all of the other sequenced cases, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.”

Comparative Effectiveness and Antibody Responses Among Hospitalized Veterans

“During February 1–September 30, 2021, mRNA vaccine effectiveness in preventing COVID-19–associated hospitalizations among U.S. veterans ≥ 120 days after receipt of the second dose was 86% for Moderna and 75% for Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines. Antibody responses to both vaccines decreased over time. Moderna vaccine recipients had higher antibody levels than did Pfizer-BioNTech recipients.” [Visit the CDC website](#) to read the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.

Racial Disparities Compound Covid Risk

“Black researchers, medical professionals and allies knew that people of color, even before Covid, experienced bias in public health policy. As the deadly virus emerged, data analysts from Carnegie Mellon and the University of Pittsburgh, foundation directors, epidemiologists and others pooled their talents to configure databases from unwieldy state data to chart covid cases. Their work documented yet another life-threatening disparity between white and Black Pittsburgh: People of color were at higher risk of catching the deadly virus and at higher risk of severe disease and death from that infection.” [Visit the KHN website](#) to read: “Data Science Proved What Pittsburgh’s Black Leaders Knew: Racial Disparities Compound Covid Risk.”

Thoughts on Breakthrough Infections

Journalist Yasmin Tayag writes about breakthrough infections in [The Atlantic](#), “At least for now, Omicron shouldn’t change how Americans act when they get a breakthrough infection. ‘All of the same things

stand, whether it's Delta, Omicron, or any other Greek letter or non-Greek letter of SARS-CoV-2,' says Stephen Kissler, an epidemiologist at Harvard. 'Once you know you're infected, hang tight, limit your encounters with other people, and just take care of yourself.'"

Resources

Communication Resources for COVID-19 Vaccines

Promote COVID-19 Vaccines: Use digital and downloadable resources to encourage your community to roll up their sleeves for a COVID-19 vaccine. Factsheets, graphics, video resources, and web widgets are available on the [CDC website](#).

LAC22 Include Focus on Post-Pandemic

NHPCO's 2022 Leadership and Advocacy Conference, March 7 – 9, will include a focus on navigating a post-pandemic world. Registration for LAC22 is now open. Join other hospice and palliative care leaders as they gather in-person at the Gaylord National Harbor Resort and Convention Center to inspire new possibilities, share innovations, and shape the future for person-centered care. Visit nhpco.org/lac2022 to learn more and register.

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