

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



NHPCO COVID-19 Update – 12/18/20

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.

NHPCO Issues Statement on COVID-19 Vaccine

On December 17, NHPCO issued a statement encouraging hospice and palliative care professionals to get the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as it is available to them. [Read the statement online.](#)

Policy Update

CMS Updates COVID-19 Vaccine Information

On Thursday, December 17, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services released a new update to the [Coverage and Reimbursement of COVID-19 Vaccines, Vaccine Administration and Cost Sharing under Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and Basic Health Program Toolkit](#) that was originally released on October 28 and first updated on November 23. This update includes additional information regarding vaccine administration reimbursement and outlines a streamlined review process available to states looking to expeditiously adjust vaccine administration reimbursement rates in their state plan. CMS also updated the toolkit with further clarification regarding managed care network adequacy and the phased distribution and administration of the Pfizer-BioNTech and other EUA approved COVID-19 vaccines.

HHS Continuing to Support Testing Efforts in States

The Department of Health and Human Services [announced three ways the federal government will continue supporting SARS-CoV-2 \(the virus that causes COVID-19\) testing efforts](#) (12/17/20) by states and territories, especially for nursing homes, into the first quarter of 2021. The new commitments build upon more than \$31 billion in resources that the U.S. government has provided to help ensure that states and their facilities that care for seniors and others at high risk of death and illness from COVID-19 have adequate testing supplies. First, HHS plans to continue to provide weekly shipments of SARS-CoV-2 sample collection supplies to states and territories through at least March 2021 and likely longer. To ensure continued testing support of vulnerable populations, HHS is allocating an additional 30 million Abbott BinaxNOW tests for nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and home health care, hospice organizations, HBCUs, tribes, and other vulnerable groups. These tests will continue support to these organizations through March 2021.

Provider Update

Strategies to Address Vaccine Hesitancy

National Institute of Health has issued a COVID-19 Vaccination* Communication: [Applying Behavioral and Social Science to Address Vaccine Hesitancy and Foster Vaccine Confidence.](#)

WSJ on Impact of COVID

In an article in the *Wall Street Journal*, journalist Katy Butler looks at the way death has changed since the COVID-19 pandemic has hit. She cites Heart of Hospice's work in the New Orleans area as an example of what hospice is doing to support those they care for. Read ["COVID Is Reshaping Death. And Maybe Life."](#)