

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



## NHPCO COVID-19 Update – 05/06/20

NHPCO has created this update for hospice and palliative care providers to share recent news and helpful links.

*“You are there for your community. NHPCO is there for you.”*

### Policy Updates

#### **Comments from Tuesday’s CMS Call with Home Health and Hospice**

Thomas Pryor, Hospice Lead for CMS Quality Safety & Oversight Group (QSOG) spoke and addressed last week’s additional long-term care guidance from CMS and indicated that hospice staff were considered essential staff. Thomas also stated that when hospices are unable to gain physical access to patients in facilities to document to the best of their ability their efforts and collaboration, as there is “no complete fix to some of these things currently.” CMS is continually working with long-term care to clarify that language for those long-term care facilities that are still not allowing for hospice staff visits. He also applauded the work of hospice bereavement support efforts.

### Provider Update

#### **Calling All Hospice Providers! Send Us Your Best Practices**

NHPCO wants to know about the quality work you are doing for your patients, their families, and your staff during this pandemic. It can be about how you have adapted your patient care provision, modified your infection control program, taken care of your staff, or anything else you feel has maintained quality practice during this difficult time in health care. We will collect and review the information with the aim of building a helpful and meaningful resource. Please send your feedback to [covid19@nhpco.org](mailto:covid19@nhpco.org).

#### **OCR Issues Guidance on Covered Health Care Providers and Restrictions on Media Access to Protected Health Information about Individuals in Their Facilities**

The OCR has issued additional guidance reminding covered health care providers that the HIPAA Privacy Rule does not permit them to give media and film crews access to facilities where patients’ protected health information (PHI) will be accessible without the patients’ prior authorization. The guidance may be found at <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/guidance-on-media-and-film-crews-access-to-phi.pdf>. For more information related to HIPAA and COVID-19, please visit: <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/special-topics/hipaa-covid19/index.html>.

#### **NHPCO Members-Only Webinar on Provider Relief Funds**

Members are encouraged to register for tomorrow’s webinar, *Up to the Minute Information on the CARES Act Provider Relief Fund -- What You Need to Know*, on May 7, 2020: 12:00 noon to 1:30 pm ET. The funding hospice providers received from the CARES Act Provider Relief Fund does come with strings attached. What should a hospice know about the funding? What resources are needed right now? In this webinar, hospice providers can submit questions ahead of time and be able to hear the latest information on Provider Relief

funds. Faculty are Meg Pekarske, Bryan Nowicki, and Andrew Brenton, of the Husch Blackwell law firm. This first in a series of three webinars is a benefit exclusively for NHPCO members. To register:

1. Log in on the NHPCO.org website
2. Paste this URL in your browser window <https://bit.ly/3cn2i6x>
3. Click the registration link located after the Webinar #1 description.

*Note: Due to a technical glitch on the NHPCO website, members need to be logged in to access this members-only page. Also, when you complete the registration form, you can submit questions that will be shared with the faculty on Thursday.*

## **Resources**

- [National Action Plan for Expanding and Adapting the Healthcare System for the Duration of the COVID Pandemic](#) (John's Hopkins, 5/5/20)
- [NIH study validates decontamination methods for re-use of N95 respirators](#) (Apr 2020)

