

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



## NHPCO COVID-19 Update – 06/24/20

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

*“Any deep crisis is an opportunity to make your life extraordinary in some way.”*

— Martha Beck

### Policy Update

#### **Providers Not Required to Submit Quarterly Report for Provider Relief Fund Payments by July 10**

According to [recent updates](#) by HHS, recipients of Provider Relief Fund payments do **not** need to submit a separate quarterly report to HHS or the Pandemic Response Accountability Committee, which had an original reporting due date in July. According to HHS, they will develop their own report which will contain all required information for Provider Relief Fund payment recipients to abide by this provision. Provider Relief Fund Payment Terms and Conditions require recipients to submit any reports **requested** by the Secretary that are required for HHS to confirm compliance with payment Terms and Conditions. **HHS will require fund recipients to submit future reports regarding fund use** and will be notifying recipients of these due dates and report content in the weeks to come.

#### **Government Funding Webinar #3**

Please stay tuned for details regarding Webinar #3 of the **Government Funding Webinar Series: Update on COVID-19 Government Funding and Guidance for Reporting**, likely to be scheduled for the second week of July.

#### **CMS/Treasury/Labor Announces Mandates for Coverage and Payment for COVID-19 Tests**

The Trump administration announced on Tuesday that insurers are not required to cover COVID-19 tests that employers may mandate as they bring employees back to work. The [guidance](#), jointly issued by CMS/Treasury and Labor, clarifies that the law only applies to tests that are deemed “medically appropriate” by a health care provider, according to an article published in [Modern Healthcare](#) on June 24 (subscription required to read article). Note, in particular, that in Question 5 (page 6) the guidance specifically states that general workplace health and safety screening and public health surveillance is beyond the scope of the coverage mandates in those laws. This has implications for whether and when third party payers will cover COVID-19 tests and other services, and will be relevant to hospice and palliative care providers who are either conducting such testing of employees, or whose employees are required to be tested in order to access hospice patients in certain facilities. NHPCO is aware of some states have issued “directives” that state mandated testing of nursing home employees is “medically necessary” and must be covered by state-regulated insurance plans. It is unknown at this time where those mandates will end up in light of this guidance. [*Thanks to Hogan Lovells for their assistance with this issue.*]

### Provider Update

#### **Medicare Fee-for-Service (FFS) Response to the Public Health Emergency on the Coronavirus**

CMS revised this MLN article to add the section, “Medicare Coverage of COVID-19 Testing for Nursing Home Residents and Patients.” All other information remains the same. [View the revised article.](#)

### **HQRP Data Submission Restarts on July 1, 2020**

NHPCO confirmed with CMS that temporary exemptions for HQRP Requirements end on **June 30, 2020** and starting on **July 1, 2020** hospices providers are expected to resume timely quality data collection and submission of CAHPS® Hospice Survey and HIS records for all new HIS admission records **and any HIS discharge records** that occur on or after **July 1, 2020**. The data collection for this year is from July 1 through December 31, 2020. Download NHPCO's [Quality Alert](#) for more important information (on the Quality Alerts & Updates page for members).

### **FDA Warning Not to Use 9 Brands of Hand Sanitizer**

FDA advises consumers not to use any hand sanitizer manufactured by Eskbiochem SA de CV in Mexico, due to the potential presence of methanol (wood alcohol), a substance that can be toxic when absorbed through the skin or ingested. [Read more on the FDA website.](#)

### **Trump Administration Issues Call to Action Based on New Data Detailing COVID-19 Impacts on Medicare Beneficiaries**

CMS is calling for a renewed national commitment to value-based care based on Medicare claims data that provides an early snapshot of the impact of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic on the Medicare population. The data shows that older Americans and those with chronic health conditions are at the highest risk for COVID-19 and confirms long-understood disparities in health outcomes for racial and ethnic minority groups and among low-income populations. [Read the CMS press release.](#)

## **Resources**

### **CAPC COVID-19 Tools**

Over the past couple of months, CAPC has been working on creating a new resource hub to house its collection of COVID-19 tools. [Visit this redesigned page](#) on the CAPC website.

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**REMINDER:** NHPCO's COVID-19 Update is published on a Monday, Wednesday, Friday distribution, should there be helpful news and links to share on those days. Of course, if urgent news breaks, NHPCO will issue an Update as needed to assist the provider community.