

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



NHPCO COVID-19 Update – 07/10/20

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

“The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.”

– Lao Tzu

Policy Update

CMS Directs Additional Resources to Nursing Homes in COVID-19 Hotspot Areas

CMS announced the agency’s targeted approach to provide additional resources to nursing homes in coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) hotspot areas. Specifically, CMS plans to deploy Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs) across the country to provide immediate assistance to nursing homes in the hotspot areas as identified by the White House Coronavirus Task Force. [Read more on the CMS website.](#)

COVID Testing for Hospice Staff Entering LTC Facilities

NHPCO received communication from CMS on the issue of COVID testing for hospice staff entering long term facilities. CMS writes:

On behalf of the CMS Hospice Survey and Certification [S&C] program, CMS wanted to follow up on questions most recently raised regarding hospice COVID testing for staff entering LTC facilities to serve hospice patients. Based on the guidance published on May 18th it is expected that that hospice staff should be included in the LTC testing program as stated on page 2 of the memo.

For tracking purposes, CMS encourages you (or your providers) to continue to reach out to CMS regarding situations where there may be concerns or other inconsistencies impacting hospice care during the COVID-19 PHE. Additionally, CMS encourages you to share inquiries with the LTC team and during the CMS “office hours” for both Hospice and LTC. CMS has provided the guidance document related to testing (refer specifically to page #2) and links to the Hospice resource mailbox; LTC resource mailbox as well as the dates/times of the office hours for your convenience.

1. [LTC guidance document related to testing](#)
2. LTC resource mailbox: DNH_TriageTeam@cms.hhs.gov
3. Hospice resource mailbox: QSOG_Hospice@cms.hhs.gov
4. HHS/Hospice and LTC call information in addition to other general office hour calls hospice providers may be interested in: [Access this information.](#)

Provider Update

FDA Updates on Hand Sanitizers with Methanol

FDA is warning consumers and health care providers that the agency has seen a sharp increase in [hand sanitizer products](#) that are labeled to contain ethanol (also known as ethyl alcohol) but that have tested positive for

methanol contamination. Methanol, or wood alcohol, is a substance that can be toxic when absorbed through the skin or ingested and can be life-threatening when ingested. [Read the FDA warning.](#)

Resources

Recent News Links of Interest on COVID-19.

- ["In Minority Neighborhoods, Knocking on Doors to Stop Spread of Coronavirus,"](#) NPR/WAMU, 07/10/20.
- ["Shelter-in-place orders prevented as many as 370K deaths, Health Affairs finds,"](#) Healthcare Dive, 07/10/20.
- ["Meet the Researcher Leading NIH's COVID-19 Vaccine Development Efforts,"](#) NIH Director's Blog, 07/09/20.
- ["The Pandemic Should Change the Way We Talk About Dying,"](#) The Atlantic, 07/03/20.

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Participate in the National Data Set Collection

NHPCO has opened data collection for the 2019 National Data Set. The NDS represents a comprehensive compilation of often hard to find, and timely data points on hospice clinical and operations data. All hospice providers are encouraged to participate, it is not limited to NHPCO members. The submission period is open through August 31, 2020. Learn more online at nhpco.org/nds.

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