

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



NHPCO COVID-19 Update – 08/12/20

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

“Nothing ever goes away until it has taught us what we need to know.”

— Pema Chödrön

Policy Update

Without a Congressional Deal, President Trump Takes Executive Action

Late last week, talks between Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, and White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows on the next COVID-19 relief package stalled. The parties remain far apart on some pressing issues, including enhanced unemployment insurance, and funding for local governments. Over the weekend, President Trump signed an executive order and three memoranda to suspend payroll taxes for the rest of the year for some, direct relevant departments and agencies to explore the impact halting evictions during the crisis, and look for funding to do so, and to extend enhanced unemployment benefits at the lower rate of \$400 per week, and defer student loan payments through 2020.

Dr. Keith Lagnese Speaks on CMS Stakeholder Call

Dr. Keith Lagnese, Chief Medical Officer of Family Hospice was featured on the CMS Home Health and Hospice Stakeholder Call on August 11, 2020. Thanks to Dr. Lagnese for sharing and highlighting best practices in delivering high quality care during the pandemic. Dr. Lagnese stressed the importance of telehealth flexibilities, testing capabilities and patient-access challenges, as well as the important role of hospices in providing bereavement care services to the entire community in times of crisis. The recording will be available on the [CMS website](#).

Paycheck Protection Program’s Future Leaves Banks, Borrowers in the Dark

The collapse of talks between Democrats and the White House over another massive coronavirus relief package has cast the future of the Paycheck Protection Program into uncertainty, POLITICO’s Zachary Warmbrodt reports. The loan program shut down on Saturday, and negotiations over the bill “stalled just as the Small Business Administration this week began accepting applications for businesses to have the loans forgiven. Now many lenders are waiting to see whether a deal can be salvaged before they start the process. The stalemate is creating more doubts for small business owners as they try to navigate the program and avoid being stuck paying back loans they expected to be forgiven.”

“It is frustrating, knowing the benefit this could have for many small business owners who are waiting to apply for forgiveness, said Holly Wade, director of research and policy analysis at the National Federation of Independent Business. ... While some of our members are currently taking forgiveness applications, many are awaiting congressional action to simplify the forgiveness process,” said Consumer Bankers Association spokesperson Allison Heimberg.”

Provider Update

Researchers Find Wearing a Neck Gaiter may be Worse than no Mask at all

Not all face masks are created equal, as we have learned over the course of this pandemic. While N95s are the gold standard for and commonly used by health-care workers, most Americans reach for accessible, reusable fabrics to protect others as we run our errands. Now researchers have found that so-called neck gaiters – typically made from a very thin layer of stretchy, polyester-spandex blend — [can be worse than wearing no mask at all](#). “These neck gaiters are extremely common in a lot of places because they’re very convenient to wear,” said Warren S. Warren, a professor of physics, chemistry, radiology and biomedical engineering at Duke. “But the exact reason why they’re so convenient, which is that they don’t restrict air, is the reason why they’re not doing much of a job helping people.”

Upcoming NHPCO Member Only Webinars

Two upcoming webinars exclusively for NHPCO members.

COVID-19 Testing Issues and the Impact on Hospice Providers.

September 9 at 2:00-3:00 p.m. ET.

Hogan Lovells attorneys Brooke Bumpers and George Ingham will share their expertise and experience as they present on issues surrounding staff testing for COVID, to include managing testing requirements, human resource and employment issues, nursing home testing considerations, privacy and reporting, financial responsibility, and laboratory considerations. NHPCO Members: Log in on the NHPCO website and then [visit this page to find the registration link](#).

Government Funding Webinar #3 - Strategies, Reporting, and Risk: Provider Relief Funding and PPP Loan Forgiveness.

September 21, 2020 at 2:00-3:00 p.m. ET.

Ted Cuppett, CPA from The Health Group, and Mark Sharp, CPA and Aaron Little, CPA from BKD will present on the recently released guidance from HHS and the SBA regarding Provider Relief Funding and SBA loan forgiveness. This webinar will assist hospices in their strategic planning, completing the submissions, and recognition of risk. Additionally, the latest information available will be provided regarding taxability and tax reporting for taxable hospices. NHPCO Members: Log in on the NHPCO website and then [visit this page to find the registration link](#).

Resources

CMS/CDC Nursing Home COVID-19 Training Series Webcast — August 13

“Transparency: Resident and Family Notification, Department of Health and Other Notifications” will be presented on Thursday, August 13 from 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. ET. During this session, learn about: Guidance and policies on transparency; Best practices to implement a communication plan; Strategies to provide compassionate care. [Register for this webcast](#).

CDC Charts: COVID-19 Associated Hospitalization Related to Underlying Medical Conditions

The CDC has created pictorial rendering to assess a person's risks with COVID-19 when it comes to age, race, or medical conditions. PDF versions of the infographics are available online as well.

- [COVID-19 Associated Hospitalization Related to Underlying Medical Conditions](#) (Example, my nephew has asthma – so he is 1.5 times more likely to get hospitalized with COVID-19.)
- [COVID-19 Hospitalization and Death by Age](#) (Example, I am 4x more likely to be hospitalized if I get COVID than an 18-29 year old with COVID, and 30x more likely to die from COVID than an 18-29 year old who gets COVID-19.)
- [Risk of Hospitalization & Death by Race & Ethnicity](#).

FEMA Webinars: Accessible Communications During Emergencies

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is hosting a two-part webinar series on accessible communications and how to effectively create them throughout the disaster cycle. FEMA and community experts will offer insights and information in advancing Inclusive Emergency Management. Separate registration for each webinar is required.

Effective ACCESSIBLE Communications (Part 1)

Thursday, August 20 at 12 -1 pm ET - [Register for the webinar.](#)

In this one-hour webinar you will learn about “plain language” writing and the basic principles of writing clear communications for your audience. Speakers will provide an overview of changes in technology that can present accessibility challenges.

Effective ACCESSIBLE Communications (Part 2)

Thursday, August 27 at 12 -1 pm ET - [Register for the webinar.](#)

This one-hour webinar will provide resources for print, TV and radio communication strategies and offer specific tools to help you write for your audience. We will explore solutions to the accessibility challenges virtual platforms can present.

CNN/KHN Article on COVID-19 Grief

A number of NHPCO members were interviewed by Judith Graham for a story published on CNN, [“Grief from Covid-19 death: Toll on bereaved family members runs deep, study says,”](#) (08/10/20), also available via [Kaiser Health News](#) (08/12/20).

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