Welcome Nursing Facility Providers!

COVID-19 Updates and Q&A with LTSCR and DSHS
February 24, 2021

For more information:

Email: LTCRPolicy@hhs.texas.gov
Phone: 512-438-3161
COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

Catherine Anglin
Program Manager: NF and LSC
Policy, Rules and Training
Long-term Care Regulation
Project Hope & Project ECHO

Panelists

Harley Jones
Project Hope Emergency Response

Elsy Benitez-Vargas
Project Hope Emergency Response

Josefina Batton
Project Hope Emergency Response
New Webinar Agenda

Webinars have replaced mini trainings with scenario-based guidance based on frequently asked questions and other topics related to COVID-19.
Reminder: HHSC COVID-19 Reporting

HHSC published PL 2021-04 to clarify HHSC COVID-19 reporting protocols.

Facilities are only required to report to HHSC within 24 hours of:

• a facility’s first positive case of COVID-19, or

• a new positive case of COVID-19 after a facility has been without a new case of COVID-19 (starting from the date of the positive test) for 14 days or more.

Do not report COVID-19 positive cases to HHSC outside of the two reportable events listed above.
Reminder: HHSC COVID-19 Reporting

Additionally, the reportable events listed above do not include a resident that was admitted to the facility with an active COVID-19 infection or a resident that developed COVID-19 within 14 days of being admitted to the facility.

HHSC LTCR Regional Offices may contact facilities to request information related to COVID-19 cases. Reporting to a LTCR Regional Office is not related to reporting COVID-19 positive cases to HHSC CII.
Reminder: HHSC COVID-19 Reporting

If a resident or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 using an antigen test and CDC guidance dictates that the antigen tests should be followed up with a confirmatory test, facilities should wait until the confirmatory test result is received before reporting the new case to HHSC.

Again, this would only be reported if the facility has been without a new, facility-onset case of COVID-19 for at least 14 days prior.
Reminder: HHSC COVID-19 Reporting

Please note that the triggering events for each federal and state COVID-19 reporting requirement may differ. Refer to PL 2020-37 and PL 2020-46 for other federal and state COVID-19 reporting requirements.
Reminder: HHSC COVID-19 Reporting - Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reportable to CII</th>
<th>Do not Report to CII</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 1: confirmed test result - NF’s first case of COVID-19</td>
<td>Jan 4: confirmed test result in staff - Additional case of COVID-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 31: confirmed test result - New case of COVID-19</td>
<td>Jan 15: confirmed test result - Additional case of COVID-19</td>
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On February 19, HHSC issued PL 2021-06, LTCR Waivers During Severe Winter Weather.

The waivers provide the following for providers who evacuated due to the winter storm:

• Capacity limit increases
• Flexibilities to certain admissions/readmission requirements
• Flexibilities for Medicaid bed transfers across county lines
COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

Robert Ochoa
Senior Policy Specialist
Policy, Rules and Training
Long-term Care Regulation
Reminder

Sign-up for Gov Delivery
To sign-up for Alerts:

• Go to:
  https://service.govdelivery.com/accounts/TXHHHSC/subscriber/new

• Enter your email address.
• Confirm your email address, select your delivery preference, and submit a password if you want one.
• Select your topics.
• When done click “Submit.”
CMS/CDC NF COVID-19 Training

CMS is offering free online training for nursing facilities related to COVID-19

Click here to view currently available pre-recorded trainings.

Facilities also have access to the CMS Targeted COVID-19 Training for Frontline Nursing Home Staff and Management

Bi-weekly Live Q&As will be held Thursdays at 4pm E.T. (3pm Central) starting August 27th.

Register Here for future Q&A webinars.
Emergency Preparedness Webinars

This webinar will review conducting a risk assessment, considerations for the different phases of emergency preparedness, and the 8 core functions of emergency management.

March 5, 2021
1:30 – 4:30 p.m.
Register for the March 5 webinar.

March 16, 2021
1:30 – 4:30 p.m.
Register for the March 16 webinar.

No continuing education hours or units are available for this webinar. A certificate of attendance will be provided. The webinar will not be recorded. Email questions to LTCR Joint Training
Impacts from February Winter Storms

LTC community providers and clients are encouraged to report impacts from the February 14-19 winter storms to help the Texas Division of Emergency Management identify storm-related damage and the impact to the state. TDEM will share this information with FEMA to help guide emergency response.

Individuals and businesses experiencing storm damage or loss of utilities can access the survey [here](#).

Individuals in need of a warming center can find access an interactive map of available locations [here](#).
CMS declared a public health emergency for Texas retroactive to Feb. 11, 2021 in response to the recent severe winter storms and issued accompanying waivers.

NF waivers include:

- For providers who lost power and were unable to report to NHSN last week, the weekly reporting will not be required for the week of February 15.
- Weekly NHSN Reports - CMS will not impose civil money penalties for non-reporting through March 4, 2021.
- 3-day Prior Hospitalizations – CMS will waive the 3-day prior hospitalization stay for coverage of SNF Part A stay for those people who experience dislocations, or are otherwise affected by the public health emergency.
Providers and suppliers are expected to have emergency preparedness programs based on an all-hazards approach. CMS has prepared webinars on emergency preparedness requirements, including topics such as:

- Emergency power supply
- 1135 waiver process
- Best Practices & Lessons Learned from past disasters
- Helpful Resources and more.

The CDC has issued updated quarantine guidance for persons who have been vaccinated for COVID-19.

HHSC and DSHS are reviewing the updated guidance and assessing impacts for long-term care.

HHSC will update providers with new quarantine guidance for long-term care facilities as soon as possible.
Construction During COVID-19

Facilities may allow construction to occur at a facility if it is considered critical assistance, and necessary to the health and safety to the residents, under the expanded reopening visitation rule.

For example, repairing a roof damaged from the winter storm or a floor damaged from flooding would be necessary.

Renovations for alter the appearance of the facility for the purposes of “sprucing up” the facility would not be considered critical assistance at this time.
Having Items Delivered

Residents may receive items from family members or otherwise have items delivered, including food, flowers, and packages.

For items delivered outside of a personal visit, NFs should designate an area outside of the facility to receive deliveries.

NF staff would retrieve the items, bring them inside, and disinfect them prior to delivering the items to the residents. Facilities should follow CDC guidance for appropriate disinfecting guidelines, depending on what the items are.
Having Items Delivered

For handling non-food items, CDC recommends hand washing after handling items delivered or after handling mail.

Per CDC, although COVID-19 can survive for a short period on some surfaces, it is unlikely to be spread from domestic or international mail, products or packaging.

It may be possible to get COVID-19 by touching an object that has the virus on it and then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

Residents have a right to privacy with their mail per federal and state rule. See 42 CFR §483.10(h)(2) and 40 TAC §19.412.
Having Items Delivered

Visitors may bring items, including food, for a resident during a visit.

For essential caregivers, the NF should inform the essential caregiver of the necessary infection control and food safety protocols for delivered items.

For other visitors, NF staff should assist to deliver the item to the resident so that the visitor does not violate physical distancing.
Having Items Delivered

Residents may eat or drink during visitation.

Visitors (including essential caregivers) may not eat or drink with resident during the visit as it would require the visitor to remove their facemask.
Having Items Delivered

From the CDC’s Food Safety webpage:

- The risk of infection by the virus from food products, food packaging, or bags is thought to be very low.
- Currently, no cases of COVID-19 have been identified where infection was thought to have occurred by touching food, food packaging, or shopping bags.
- Do NOT use disinfectants designed for hard surfaces, such as bleach or ammonia, on food packaged in cardboard or plastic wrap.
- After handling food packages and before eating food, always wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

Kevin Knippa
Senior Policy Specialist
Policy, Rules and Training
Long-term Care Regulation
Reminder: Emergency Power and Generators

All NFs must have emergency power according to the current rules.

• For facilities licensed before Sept. 11, 2003, the source can be batteries or a generator.

• All facilities licensed on or after Sept. 11, 2003, must have a generator.
Emergency Generators and Heating

Facilities that must have a generator

• Winter 99% design temperature lower than 20 degrees F – generator must provide power for heating

• 99% design temperature = coldest expected temp for 99% of hours in a year, based on past 30 years.

• Design temperature is not the coldest day ever or the temperature on a given day.
Winter Design Temperature

- Texas has 254 counties
- Not every county has a Winter design temperature below 20 degrees F
- Just because your Winter design temperature is 20 degrees F or higher does not mean your residents are safe in the Winter
- Travis County has a Winter design temperature of 28 degrees F. It was 8 degrees on February 15 with an average temperature of 15 degrees F
What is my winter design temperature?

• Ask your HVAC repair company
• Ask your local building department
• Ask a mechanical engineer
• Online resources – [EPA Energy Star Reference Guide](https://www.energystar.gov/ia/about-energy-efficiency) (Organized by County)
What is my winter design temperature?

Texas Counties with 99% Heating Temp Lower than 20 Deg. F
Cold Weather Impact on Generators

• Operation
  • Same challenges as your vehicle
    • Lubricating oil is thicker
    • Coolants can freeze

• Fuel
  • Fuel efficiency is lower (might need more fuel)
  • Different fuel types react to extreme cold differently (see slides on Temperature and Fuel)
Operation and Maintenance

• Extreme cold is tough on batteries
• Might require different oil in cold months
• Might need more antifreeze in cold months
• Glow plugs, engine block heater or other engine heater might mitigate some of the impacts of extreme cold temperatures.
Temperature and Fuel

Diesel

• Diesel will crystallize or “gel” at 32 degrees F

• Anti-gel additive
  • Add to fuel before freezing
  • Can be used to “de-gel” diesel
  • Might be hard to get in the South
  • Hard to get right now because of weather

• Installing a fuel heater as part of the generator set might be a solution
Temperature and Fuel

Gasoline

- 10%-20% Less efficient at low temperatures = burn more fuel to do the same work
- Over time gasoline will attract water
  - Sputtering on start-up
  - Might not run continuously
  - Use older gasoline and replace it
  - Test gasoline for water content
  - Gasoline with a lot of water in it might start to freeze, especially in fuel line.
Temperature and Fuel

Natural Gas

• Gas wells can freeze in extreme cold
• Shortage in extremely cold weather because of reduced production and increased demand
• Natural gas generators don’t usually have a back-up fuel
• Gas utility might shut-off gas service during cold weather shortages
• Texas Railroad Commission can order cuts in service
Temperature and Fuel

Propane

- Stored as a liquid
- Gauges might not read accurately
- At extreme low temperatures, propane will not expand into a gas
  - Air temperatures are probably not a problem
  - Accumulations of ice and snow on and around a propane tank can be a problem
- No expansion means no combustion
Emergency Preparedness

According to the federal emergency preparedness rules, a NF must address provisions for sheltering in place, including an alternate source of energy to maintain temperatures to protect resident health and safety and for the safe and sanitary storage of provision. (42 CFR §483.73(b)(1) - E-0015)
COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

David Gruber
Associate Commissioner for Regional and Local Health Operations
DSHS
State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

Statewide phone: 800-252-2412
• Statewide email: ltc.ombudsman@hhs.texas.gov

State Ombudsman: Patty Ducayet, 737-704-9075 (or) patty.ducayet@hhs.Texas.gov

COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

Melody Malone, PT, CPHQ, MHA, CDP, CADDCT
TeamSTEPPS® Master Trainer
INTERACT® Certified Champion
Healthcare Quality Improvement Specialist
TMF Health Quality Institute
NHSN Programming Error

• The NHSN application was corrected on February 20, 2021. As of February 21, 2021, NHSN users can enter and save COVID-19 vaccination data for LTCF staff and residents without complications.

• For some users, it may have appeared that the Moderna COVID-19 vaccination data for LTCF staff was saved by NHSN; however, the data were not permanently recorded in the NHSN database. If LTCF staff data entered for your facility were affected, we will contact you directly. No data entered prior to February 5, 2021 were affected.
NHSN Webinar

Resident Impact & Facility Capacity Pathway

Date: Thursday, Feb 25, 2021

Time: 11:00 A.M. – 12:30 P.M. Eastern Time

Register in advance for this webinar: https://cdc.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_IU7GEIyPQe2cnxqEbMUWyg

**Please note the webinars have the same link. Attendees will be able to choose which session they are able to attend. Both webinars are identical in content, so please plan to attend once.
New LTC module COVID-19- Resident Therapeutics

- **COVID-19 Resident Therapeutics Form (57.158)** (print-only) – **February 4, 2021**

- **Table of Instructions (57.158)** – **February 4, 2021**

- Please note that “leaving the questions in blank” will be considered missing data.
NHSN Updates

• Resident Impact and Facility Capacity
• Importing Data Resources
  • How to Upload COVID-19 CSV Data Files
  • Resident Therapeutics Template = Individual
  • Resident Therapeutics Template = Group
• https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/ltc/covid19/index.html

• New Archived Training: Point of Care Test Reporting Tool – February, 2021
NHSN Updates

Important Notes:

• If a facility is unable to do their weekly COVID-19 reporting, send a helpdesk ticket to NHSN with the subject line:

  “No weekly reporting available on calendar.”

• If a facility is unable to report POC testing results in the POC test reporting tool due to an error message, send in a helpdesk ticket to NHSN with the subject line:

  “Error in Database Possible Defect.”

• E-mail user support at: nhsn@cdc.gov
NHSN Annual Facility Survey

• Due each year for the prior year’s information.

• Tips:
  • Download the form and instructions
  • Gather all the information
  • Complete the Survey in one entry – there is NO save along the way.

• Annual Facility Survey form
• Table of Instructions
Non-reporting into NHSN

• For facilities not be able to report to NHSN or the data will be delayed beyond March 4, 2021, email: NHSN@cdc.gov

• **Subject Line:** LTCF: Delay on NHSN COVID-19 data reporting - Name of the facility, Org. ID #, CCN#

• **Body:** Explain the reason for the delay: Building closed due to Winter Storms damages, etc.

• Notify the survey agency at email: LTCRSurveyOperations@hhs.texas.gov
NHSN RESOURCES

- See TMF resources here: [NHSN Resources](#)
- CDC NHSN COVID19 Module: [https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/ltc/covid19/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/ltc/covid19/index.html)
- Details on SAMS Level 3: [SAMS Level Three Access](#)
- NHSN website changes: [LTC Website Refresh Walk-through](#)
CMS Targeted COVID-19 Training for Frontline Nursing Home Staff & Management Learning

- **Available through the CMS Quality, Safety & Education Portal (QSEP).**
- **Can be completed on a cell phone**
- **Frontline nursing home staff modules:**
  - Module 1: Hand Hygiene and PPE
  - Module 2: Screening and Surveillance
  - Module 3: Cleaning the Nursing Home
  - Module 4: Cohorting
  - Module 5: Caring for Residents with Dementia in a Pandemic
- **3 hours total training time**

- **Management staff modules:**
  - Module 1: Hand Hygiene and PPE
  - Module 2: Screening and Surveillance
  - Module 3: Cleaning the Nursing Home
  - Module 4: Cohorting
  - Module 5: Caring for Residents with Dementia in a Pandemic
  - Module 6: Basic Infection Control
  - Module 7: Emergency Preparedness and Surge Capacity
  - Module 8: Addressing Emotional Health of Residents and Staff
  - Module 9: Telehealth for Nursing Homes
  - Module 10: Getting Your Vaccine Delivery System Ready
- **4 hours total training time**
Reach out to us at:

nhnetwork@tmf.org

to submit requests for assistance with NHSN reporting problems or quality improvement assistance.
Questions?

For more information:
Email: LTCPolicy@hhs.texas.gov
Phone: 512-438-3161
Thank you!

For more information:
Email: LTCRPolicy@hhs.Texas.gov
Phone: 512-438-3161
AHRQ ECHO National Nursing Home COVID-19 Action Network
Fact Sheet

TMF Health Quality Institute invites Medicare- or Medicaid-certified nursing homes to join the new Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) ECHO National Nursing Home COVID-19 Action Network, available at no cost. Participating nursing homes will receive $6,000 in compensation in recognition of the staff time involved. This reimbursement is available from the Provider Relief Fund to eligible facilities that have agreed to its terms and conditions. Application for continuing education credit is pending.

- We have assembled an experienced team of experts to help facilitate this community of practice and support participating nursing homes in areas of safety and quality improvement (QI).
- The curriculum, which will be updated weekly, covers a wide scope of topics related to COVID-19 response and preparedness, as well as QI methods to support ongoing testing and learning by staff.
- A minimum of two staff members from your institution must participate on your team and attend the weekly meeting. Preferably, a certified nursing assistant will be one of the participating staff members.

Broadly, the network aims to address the following goals:

- Keep the virus from entering nursing homes where it has not entered
- Ensure early identification of residents and staff who have been infected with the virus
- Prevent the spread of the virus between staff, residents and visitors
- Provide safe and appropriate care to residents with mild and asymptomatic cases
- Ensure staff have the knowledge, skills and confidence to implement best-practice safety measures to protect residents and themselves
- Reduce social isolation for residents, families and staff during these difficult times

Network sessions will run for 16 weeks and will use the Project ECHO model – an “all teach, all learn” methodology developed around case-based learning and active engagement. Project ECHO's virtual guided practice approach has gained significant traction both nationally and globally as a core learning strategy for education and training in healthcare.

To take part in this important QI initiative, please email ProjectECHO@tmf.org by March 8, 2021.
COVID-19 in Nursing Homes: Let's Get Practical

Project HOPE and the University of Chicago, in partnership with the ECHO Institute, AHRQ and IHI, are launching a new series on COVID-19 for nursing homes. It build on CMS COVID-19 webinars by helping nursing home navigate the practical challenges of implementing recommendations. In these Zoom session, you will hear from experts in geriatrics, infectious diseases and quality improvement and share challenges and solution with your peers.

Series Details
Curriculum includes topics like:
- COVID-19 prevention and management
- testing
- community transmission and screening
- advanced care planning
- emotional well-being of staff
- effective leadership and communication

This learning opportunity is designed for directors of nursing, nurses, administrators, medical directors and other frontline staff. Each session last 90-minutes for a 16 week duration. There is no travel required as content is presented online.

This activity has been approved for AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™ and CEUs. Opportunity to receive up to $6,000 for participation, if eligible, for funding from the Provider Relief Fund (PRF).

Click on a link below to register for your cohort of choice:

(Team from each nursing home should register for the same cohort time)

Wednesday | 3-4:30 p.m. CST
Friday | 12-1:30 p.m. CST