Welcome Nursing Facility Providers!

COVID-19 Updates and Q&A with LTCR and DSHS
May 5, 2021

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

Panelist

Robert Ochoa
Senior Policy Specialist
Policy & Rules
Long-term Care Regulation
Webinar Schedule Change

Starting this week, the Nursing Facility Provider Webinars will change to a bi-weekly schedule.

The next webinar will be May 19th.

As always, we will send notifications for the webinars through GovDelivery alerts and post them on the Nursing Facility Provider Portal.
DSHS Urges Providers to Order Vaccines

DSHS currently has additional COVID-19 Vaccines available to providers who are signed up to be a COVID-19 Vaccine Provider.

Facilities that are currently signed up to be a COVID-19 Vaccine Provider are encouraged to order vaccines doses as needed.

Facilities can sign up to become a COVID-19 Vaccine Provider through this website: https://www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/immunize/provider-enrollment.aspx
Updated CMS Guidance - Visitation

Last week, CMS published updated guidance regarding:
• Testing Requirements (QSO-20-38)
• Group Activities/Communal Dining (QSO-20-39) and
• Visitation (QSO-20-39)

NFs can begin following CMS guidance related to testing requirements and group activities/communal dining immediately.

NFs must still follow all requirements per state visitation rules. HHSC is currently reviewing emergency rules in response to the CDC’s new facemask guidance and will update providers as soon as possible.
PPE & Source Control for Visitors

Per the Expansion of Reopening Visitation Rule PPE requirements break down into:

**Essential Caregiver Requirements:**

- must wear a facemask.
- A cloth face covering does not meet this requirement.
- must also wear gloves, gown, and face shield/googles when visiting COVID-19 positive or unknown COVID-19 status residents

**All other visitors:**

- Must wear a facemask or cloth face covering over mouth and nose
PPE & Source Control for Visitors

For the time being, facemasks/PPE is **required for all visitors**, regardless of vaccination status.

HHSC is currently reviewing emergency rules in response to the CDC’s new facemask guidance and will update providers as soon as possible.
Retiring PL 2020-53

In response to the updated guidance from CDC/CMS regarding group activities and communal dining, HHSC is retiring PL 2020-53: Guidance for Activities, Dining, and Volunteers.

Information from PL 2020-53 related to use of volunteers is still included in the NF COVID-19 Response Plan.

Please note that guidance related to group activities and communal dining is not yet updated in the NF COVID-19 Response Plan. Facilities should refer to CDC and CMS guidance in the meantime.
COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

David Gruber
Associate Commissioner for Regional and Local Health Operations
DSHS
COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

Catherine Anglin
Program Manager: NF and LSC
Policy & Rules
Long-term Care Regulation
Visitation Reminders

26 TAC §554.2803(c) states:

Visitors, except for essential caregivers, may be any age. Visitors under the age of two are exempt from all requirements related to wearing masks described in this section.

Providers must accommodate a resident’s choice on who they would like to visit, including children.
Visitation Reminders

26 TAC §554.2803(h) states:

A nursing facility may not require a personal visitor to provide documentation of a COVID-19 negative test or COVID-19 vaccination status as a condition of visitation or to enter the facility.

A NF may ask a visitor’s vaccination status. However, the visitor can refuse to answer and the facility must not prohibit visitation based on the visitor not providing documentation of vaccination status or refusing to answer.

Continued on next slide...
26 TAC §554.2803(h) cont.

Per **CDC guidance**, a visitor whose vaccination status is not known, including when the visitor does not answer a question about whether they are vaccinated, would be considered unvaccinated.

“Unvaccinated refers to a person who does not fit the definition of “fully vaccinated,” including people whose vaccination status is not known, for the purposes of this guidance.”
Visitation Reminders

26 TAC §554.2803(i)(3) states:

An essential caregiver visit may occur outdoors, in the resident’s bedroom, or in another area in the facility that limits visitor movement through the facility and interaction with other residents.
Visitation Reminders

26 TAC §554.2803(o)(1) states:

Visitation appointments must be scheduled to allow time for cleaning and sanitization of the visitation area between visits.

This applies to all visit types. However, a facility must ensure all residents have equal access to visitation. An overly restrictive scheduling policy could be considered a violation of a resident’s rights if the visit could not occur because of the scheduling policy.
COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

Heidi Lizyness
Policy Specialist
Policy & Rules
Long-term Care Regulation
Hand Hygiene


The CDC also states that ABHR are the preferred method for cleaning hands in most clinical settings. However, healthcare personnel should wash hands with soap and water whenever they are visibly dirty, before eating, and after using the restroom.
Hand Hygiene

Ideally, the facility will have an adequate supply of ABHR dispensers AND soap and water at handwashing stations throughout the facility. This ensures that there are a couple options to sanitize hands in all parts of the facility at all times.

See the CDC’s Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings for more information and specific scenarios where ABHR or soap and water may be more appropriate.
COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

Kevin Knippa
Senior Policy Specialist
Policy & Rules
Long-term Care Regulation

- Updates to Appendix Z
Hurricane Season

• June 1 - November 30
• For the last 6 years the first named Atlantic storm has developed before June
• NOAA Monitoring will start on May 15

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CMS Issued QSO 21-15-ALL

CMS revised QSO 21-15 on March 26, 2021.

• What?

• Why?
  • Burden Reduction Final Rule Interpretive Guidelines (84 FR 51732)
  • Expanded Guidance related to Emergency Infectious Disease (EIDs)
What Changed in Appendix Z?

• Adds new definitions based on the Burden Reduction Final Rule – specifically, it expands the type of acceptable testing exercises.
• Clarifies expectations about documentation of the emergency program.
• Adds guidance and considerations for Emerging Infectious Disease (EID) planning stages, including PPE.

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What Changed in Appendix Z? (Cont.)

• Adds additional guidance on risk assessments, including assessment of risks around Emerging Infectious Diseases.

• Includes planning considerations for surge and staffing.

• Expands guidance for surge planning, including recommendations for natural disaster surge planning and EID surge planning.

(continued on next slide)
• Includes recommendations during Public Health Emergencies for facilities to monitor CDC and other public health agencies which may issue event-specific guidance and recommendations to healthcare workers.

• Clarifies existing guidance on the use of portable generators and maintaining safe temperatures.

• Expands guidance and clarifies guidance about alternate care sites and 1135 Waivers.

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What Changed in Appendix Z? (Cont.)

- Expands guidance and best practices about reporting of facility needs, a facility’s ability to provide assistance and occupancy reporting.
- Revises guidance about training and testing program (the Burden Reduction Rule extensively changed these requirements).
- Clarifies exemptions to testing exercises when a provider experiences an actual emergency event.
Facility-Based: We consider the term “facility-based” to mean the emergency preparedness program is specific to the facility. It includes but is not limited to hazards specific to a facility based on its geographic location; dependent patient/resident/client and community population; facility type and potential surrounding community assets—i.e., rural area versus a large metropolitan area.

Full-Scale Exercise: A full scale exercise is an operations-based exercise that typically involves multiple agencies, jurisdictions, and disciplines performing functional (for example, joint field office, emergency operation centers, etc.) and integration of operational elements involved in the response to a disaster event, i.e., “boots on the ground” response activities (for example, hospital staff treating mock patients). Though there is no specific number of entities required to participate in a full-scale community-based exercise, it is recommended that it be a collaborative exercise which involves at a minimum local or state emergency officials and is robust to develop community-based responses to potential threats.

Functional Exercise (FE): The Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS’s) Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) explains that FEs are an operations-based exercise that is designed to validate and evaluate capabilities, multiple functions and/or sub-functions, or interdependent groups of functions. FEs are typically focused on exercising plans, policies, procedures, and staff members involved in management, direction, command, and control functions. For additional details, please visit HSEEP guidelines located at: https://preptoolkit.fema.gov/documents/1269813/1269861/HSEEP_Revision_Apr13_Final.pdf/65bc7843-1d10-47b7-be0d-45118a4d21da

Mock Disaster Drill: A mock disaster drill is a coordinated, supervised activity usually employed to validate a specific function or capability in a single agency or organization. Mock disaster drills are commonly used to provide training on new equipment, validate procedures, or practice and maintain current skills. For example, mock disaster drills may be appropriate for establishing a community-designated disaster receiving center or shelter. Mock disaster drills can also be used to determine if plans can be executed as...
### E-Tags

**Applicable to NF**

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- New or changed guidance
- **Substantial changes**

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### E-Tags Communication Plan

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### E-Tags Training & Testing

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- New or changed guidance
- **Substantial changes**

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### E-Tags

**Applicable to NF**

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- New or changed guidance
- **Substantial changes**
Joint Training Opportunity

Emergency Preparedness in Long-Term Care Facilities

This course provides guidance that an RN, an LVN, a social worker, and other staff members can use to develop a disaster plan. You will learn the basic steps of emergency preparedness (including risk assessment and plan development) and the eight core functions of a disaster plan. You will also learn the federal requirements for emergency preparedness.

May 14, 2021 | 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Register for the webinar.

June 3, 2021 | 1:30 – 4:30 p.m.
Register for the webinar.
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

Weekly Facebook Live Q&A for Families of LTC Residents: Every Wednesday, 12:15 to 12:45
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
New Video posted this week for NHSN:

Point of Care Testing Results:

- NHSN LTCF COVID-19 Module: How to Upload a CSV File for Point of Care Testing Results - YouTube
Weekly COVID-19 Vaccination Reporting

• Master website link for this module: https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/ltc/weekly-covid-vac/index.html

• Link to training slides: LTC Weekly COVID-19 Vaccination Reporting (cdc.gov)

• Please send any questions via e-mail to: nhsn@cdc.gov with ‘Weekly COVID-19 Vaccination’ in the subject line.

Weekly reporting is currently optional for both Influenza and COVID-19 vaccination modules however, CMS is looking for you to start reporting.
NHSN Vaccine Reporting Tools

- Data Tracking Worksheet for COVID-19 Vaccination among Residents – December 2020 [XLS – 600 KB]

- Data Tracking Worksheet for COVID-19 Vaccination among Healthcare Personnel – December 2020 [XLS – 600 KB]
NHSN Vaccine Module Training

May 11, 2021 - Time: 3:30 p.m. Eastern Time/2 p.m. Central Time

Replay Sessions:
• Tuesday, May 18, 2021
• Thursday, May 20, 2021
• Tuesday, May 25, 2021
• Thursday, May 27, 2021
• Register in advance for one of the webinar dates:
  • NHSN Vaccine Module Training Registration
CMS Targeted COVID-19 Training for Frontline Nursing Home Staff & Management Learning

• Available through the [CMS Quality, Safety & Education Portal (QSEP)](https://www.cms.gov).  
• 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
TMF LTC Connect – 30 minute sessions

- May 20 – Hit the Easy Button on NHSN COVID Data
  - Register: [May 20 - NHSN COVID Data Webinar](#)

- June 10 – Hit the Easy Button on NHSN COVID Data *Part 2*
  - Register: [NHSN COVID Data Part 2](#)

- Sessions start at 1:30 pm
NHSN RESOURCES

• TMF resources here: NHSN Resources
• CDC NHSN COVID19 Module: https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/ltc/covid19/index.html
• Details on SAMS Level 3: SAMS Level Three Access
  • Having backup Users is crucial to staying in compliance with reporting!
  • This process can take up to four weeks to be completed, but you will not lose access to NHSN at any time during the process.
Reach out to us at:

nhnetwork@tmf.org

to submit requests for assistance with NHSN reporting problems or quality improvement assistance.
COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

Heidi Lizyness  
Policy Specialist  
Policy & Rules  
Long-term Care Regulation

Questions from last week
Q&A

Can staff's family come into the facility?

At this time, only those individuals identified in the Expansion of Reopening Visitation Emergency Rule may enter the facility.

If a staff family member were serving as one of those identified persons (i.e. volunteer, personal visitor for a resident, or contract service provider) then they would be able to enter, assuming all applicable infection prevention and control protocol is followed.

See PL 2021-08 for more information.
Can NFs start conducting off-site activities? An example would be trips to community bingo, or museums, or outdoor events?

Yes, NFs may conduct facility outings. NFs will have to consider available transportation and how to ensure proper physical distancing when transporting individuals who are not fully-vaccinated.

NFs must educate residents on the risks and necessary infection prevent and control measures associated with going out into the community. See the NF COVID-19 Response Plan and QSO-20-39 for more information.
Reminders

GovDelivery Alerts
Don’t forget to sign up for GovDelivery alerts at [https://service.govdelivery.com/accounts/TXHHS_C/subscriber/new](https://service.govdelivery.com/accounts/TXHHS_C/subscriber/new)
Select “Nursing Facility Resources” as a topic option to receive webinar updates.

CMS/CDC 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
Reminders

Webinars: Enhancing Resident Quality of Life through Volunteerism.

These webinars will provide free CEs through the endorsement of the Consortium for Therapeutic Recreation/Activities Certification (CTRAC) in Texas. Only Activity Professionals will receive CE credit.

• May 17th | 5 - 8pm: [Register here](#)
• May 24th | 5 - 8pm: [Register here](#)
• May 26th | 5 - 8pm: [Register here](#)
Reminders

CNA Symposium Webinar Recordings.


For CNAs, this offering may meet some, but not all, of the annual in-service requirements. No CE is offered to licensed nurses, administrators or social workers for viewing these videos.

Email nurseaideregistry@hhsc.state.tx.us with questions.
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
Links to Handouts:

• [NF COVID-19 Expansion of Reopening Visitation Emergency Rule](#)