



Nursing Home Weekly: Recap of LeadingAge Updates

November 13, 2020

Monday November 16 Coronavirus Call. Hospitals and Home Health providers have been on the frontlines fighting the coronavirus pandemic and with cases surging, hospital providers have some key insights for other providers of care in dealing with COVID-19. Join us Monday at 3:30 Eastern to hear from Michael Mutterer, Vice President of Patient Care at Silver Cross Hospital in Illinois. Michael will share the lessons learned from the first surge in cases and how providers of services for older adults can adapt and be ready for what comes next. He also has some key examples for home health care providers and how you can build staff morale and keep key staff, even during the most difficult of times. If you haven't registered for our calls, you can [join us here](#).

2020 LeadingAge Award of Honor -Every year, we bestow the Award of Honor on one member who has provided nationally significant, transformative leadership in aging services. This person shows vision, mission, compassion, and courage every day in their communities. This year, in the face of great adversity and overwhelming tragedy, you have all risen to the occasion and demonstrated remarkable leadership and unbelievable courage in what will likely be remembered as the hardest year of your life. [Watch Katie Smith Sloan's presentation of the award.](#)

Please Take This Short Survey on COVID-19 Needs

As we continue to fight for you and all our members on the Hill and in the media, it's critical that we understand the ever-changing state of your needs. [Please complete the following fast questions](#) to support our efforts. Your individual responses will not be shared.

CMS Nursing Home call. With increasing community spread of COVID, 74% of nursing homes nationwide are experiencing COVID, Seema Verma said at a 30 minute call Thursday with associations. "Some have one case and can mitigate it, others face quick spread of infection," she said. The purpose of today's call was to review recent developments and preview upcoming activities. Four new points of information came up:

1. **Phone calls to each nursing home with a positive COVID case.** Each nursing home that has at least one positive diagnosis of COVID (and possibly those that have reported PPE or testing shortages) will receive a phone call from CMS, CDC, or a QIO and be given a 7-8 question assessment, then triaged for help. We have heard that the questions might cover: PPE, cohorting, percentage of staff who completed the CMS/CDC training, frequency of testing, how the outbreak occurred, availability and supply of tests. More information as we receive it. Those needing the most help will be "triated to resources," though it was made clear that the resources would have to come from the states, as CMS doesn't have these resources.
2. **Holiday guidance.** CMS is working on something that will come out soon to help providers with the holidays. They are very concerned about residents leaving nursing homes, which of course,

they cannot prevent. They are also concerned about staff participating in family gatherings, including with college students on break.

3. **Monoclonal antibodies.** Administrator Verma said CMS is pleased about the new Lilly monoclonal antibodies. Allocations are going to states and states will distribute them; they show promising results in older people and in those who are not hospitalized. CMS has determined that these are “more like vaccines” so infusions can take place in nursing homes.
4. **Publishing names of nursing homes whose staff took the CMS/CDC training.** CMS leaders strongly urge nursing homes to have their staff take the three hour CMS/CDC training. Administrator Verma said many nursing homes that have outbreaks have not taken the training. The difference, she observed, is around the understanding of infection control. [This training is not mandatory and is separate from the longer QIO training and from Project ECHO.]

Additional points reviewed were that everyone is hopeful that not only will the Pfizer vaccine be available soon, but the Moderna one as well. The CVS/Walgreen’s partnership arrangements are being finalized and will be ready to start as soon as the vaccine is available. Most nursing homes have signed up to participate and CMS hopes most eligible assisted living communities have too. Finally, Verma said she and others on the call encourage continued dialog, including about issues raised by associations such as duplicative reporting – and a request to extend the date for reporting testing beyond November 20; paying for testing; and an ongoing request for less punitive surveys focused more on infection control. Nursing home members with questions should continue to send them to LeadingAge state partners or directly to Janine or Jodi. We will consolidate and continue to send them to CMS.

National Academies Holds Public Meeting of Nursing Home Commission. The National Academies held its first open meeting of the Commission on The Quality of Care in Nursing Homes this week. At the meeting the commissioners met the sponsors and discussed the sponsors’ vision(s) for the commission. The specter of the COVID pandemic clearly affected the concerns and commitment of both sponsors and commissioners (although it was made clear that this was not intended to address the issues raised in the LTC Commission led by CMS). Issues included very specific nursing home concerns around staffing, survey and cert, financing, quality, technology and innovation. Sponsors addressed other broader issues including nexus between nursing homes and the desire for home-based care, lack of health care system structure to address the logistical challenges of this and future pandemics, impact of demographics and racial disparities, the impact of media and ageism on the way the public and decision-makers view nursing homes. There was agreement that this Commission should aim to be as consequential as the 1986 IOM Study. As Terry Fulmer from the John A. Hartford Foundation said, this commission was an opportunity to create a report that is **actionable, recommend timely policy changes, and evince bold thinking.**

Given the wide-ranging issues identified by the sponsors, commissioners wanted to know if their charge was limited to nursing homes, whether they should be concerned about the political viability of their recommendations, and whether they should focus on systems or the specific issues related to nursing homes. The answer was a little fuzzy – though some commissioners and funders raised regulations and survey and cert as concerns, others were more broad in their thinking. So it will be interesting to see how they end up – if they really revise the current way we identify and measure quality or go in a different direction. The next public meeting is November 19.

LeadingAge Webinar on Provider Relief Fund Reporting Requirements, December 2: LeadingAge will be hosting a webinar with accounting experts from LeadingAge Silver Sponsor CLA on December 2 at 2 p.m. ET on **Provider Relief Funds Reporting Requirements**. This webinar will outline how LeadingAge members can maximize their use of PRF payments received while complying with the current reporting requirements. Please share with members. For more information and to register for the webinar: <https://learninghub.leadingage.org/courses/provider-relief-funds-reporting-requirements>

Provider Relief Validation. A hearty thank you for reviewing the HHS file for members and tracking down their information! Nicole has submitted what we received from you to Argentum who is merging all the senior living associations' files together. The final document will be sent to HHS. We are awaiting further information on the next steps in the process for those providers for whom we have submitted updated data. We believe that they will be validated by HHS and then sent the link to complete the remaining financial portion of the application before Nov. 27. We will update you when we get more information.

PRF Phase 3 payments. HHS is trying to stick to their schedule and have all applications/financial information in by Nov. 27. They are optimistic at present that they will be able to provide add-on payments to providers in this phase to cover a good portion of lost revenues and expenses. HHS indicated the number of applicants for Phase 3 was surprisingly low. We along with AHCA have heard of providers returning funds received because the reporting requirements appear so burdensome. This issue was raised to HHS.

Still no update on the status of missing Provider Relief Funds Infection Control Incentive Payments. HHS did say it was possible to get a list of organizations that HHS sent funds too but we have not yet received such list. In the meantime, it looks like the second round of incentive payments for September performance will be sent out "very soon" likely within the next week.

New Center on Aging and Trauma. The Jewish Federations of North America announced the launch of a new JFNA Center on Aging and Trauma. Using a grant from the Administration on Community Living, the Center builds on the lessons learned from serving Holocaust survivors to develop innovations in person-centered, trauma-informed (PCTI) care for Holocaust survivors and other populations with a history of trauma and their family caregivers as well. There are resources included on PCTI approach and much more on the [Center's website](#).

Long-Term Effects of COVID. CDC has posted new information about the long-term effects of COVID-19. [This resource](#) talks about persistent symptoms and [this resource](#) talks about long-term effects. It's important to note that these documents are based on data from COVID-19 survivors and are not specific to older adults and learning will evolve over time.

Advancing Excellence 2020 Virtual Summit. The Advancing Excellence in Long-Term Care Collaborative (AELTCC) will host its annual summit virtually December 9-11, exploring the topic: [Mitigating Racial Inequities in Post-Acute & Long-Term Care](#). Participation is free and open to collaborative member organizations and their constituents. LeadingAge is a member of AELTCC. Here is a link to [register](#) for the meeting.

As nursing homes have struggled to adapt to COVID-19 and keep residents safe, the pandemic has highlighted and exacerbated widespread disparities in healthcare outcomes. Amid national cries for

racial justice, nursing homes are challenged to understand and address persistent inequalities experienced by patients, staff, and leaders of color. The AELTCC summit will feature three afternoons of education and action. During Day 1, nationally renowned experts will describe the presence and causes of racial disparities in nursing homes and how this connects to systemic racism. Day 2 will feature working sessions for AELTCC members to develop plans of action based on barriers and opportunities identified in Day 1. The meeting will culminate on Day 3 with a discussion on these action plans and concrete next steps for advancing equity in PALTC.

BD Veritor educational tools. Here's a listing of BD Veritor tools with links:

Website training pages: [Click Here](#)

How to use tab on BD.com: [Click here](#)

New modes poster: [Click here](#)

Video link, YouTube (and all digital channels): [Click here](#)

Quick reference guide: [Click here](#)

Webinar register and re-watch: [Click here](#)

Conversation with BD staff. We learned today in our every other week conversation with BD staff that there are no test kit shortages for the Veritor machine. If you are hearing from any distributor that there is a long wait or a shortage of BD Veritor supplies, please let Ruth or Janine know so we can pass the information on to BD.

Finding Safe Solutions for Thanksgiving. This hot topic remains at the top of the dialogue with members, as the biggest family-centric holiday of the year approaches. We released an article that reviews [Member Solutions for a COVID-Safe Thanksgiving](#) and, very soon, a companion article on [CDC and States Guidance for Thanksgiving: Travel and Gatherings](#) will follow. We continue to gather members' ideas and solutions for this complex and multi-faceted challenge: how to encourage families to reconnect and reunite safely over the holidays, without unduly exposing the people we serve to COVID 19.

Annual Meeting Virtual Experience is Underway

This week, we kicked off the [Annual Meeting Virtual Experience](#). It's not too late to take part in this extraordinary program. Here's a look ahead at what you won't want to miss:

- Scott Gotlieb: A Road Map to COVID-19 Recovery
- Inclusion Night: LGBT Network for the 14th Annual Inclusion Night. [RSVP today!](#)
- Keynote: Cultivating Courage and Hope (Part 2) with Brené Brown
- Business Intelligence Zone: Explore the expo component of this online event. [Thank you to our 2020 exhibitors.](#)

Register now and don't miss out on next week's three additional days of insightful content.