**COVID-19 Vaccine**

**Leaders Guide**

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**Leader’s Guide**

A well-planned, ongoing COVID-19 vaccination program will be essential for Long Term Care facilities in the effort to mitigate the spread from COVID-19, quality of care and regulatory compliance. Providing education, support and encouragement to facility employees, residents and resident representatives will be essential in the effort to combat the spread of COVID-19. Ongoing education and support for facility employees will be essential in order to promote vaccine confidence. It will be essential for leaders of the facility to educate themselves to provide a clear message on the effectiveness and safety of the COVID-19 vaccine.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), HHS, November 2021 put out an interim final rule, “Medicare and Medicaid Programs; Omnibus COVID-19 Health Care Staff Vaccination”. On May 11, 2021, The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) QSO-21-19-NH published an “Interim Final Rule-COVID-19 Vaccine Immunization Requirements for Residents and Staff”. CMS indicated: “This includes new requirements for educating residents or resident representatives and staff regarding the benefits and potential side effects associated with the COVID-19 vaccine, and offering the vaccine. Furthermore, LTC facilities must report COVID-19 vaccine and therapeutics treatment information to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN)”1 consistent with F884.

**F884: Reporting – National Health Safety Network (NHSN)** outlines requirements for:

* Electronically reporting COVID-19 information in a standardized format specified by the secretary
* Reporting at a frequency specified at the Secretary (weekly)

**F887: COVID-19 Immunizations** outlines requirements for:

* Policies and Procedures
* Offering COVID-19 Vaccines
* Education regarding benefits, risks, and potential side effects
* Provision of current information
* Consent
* Opportunity to accept or refuse vaccine
* Documentation required
* Reporting COVID-19 vaccination adverse events

**F888: COVID-19 Vaccination of Facility Staff**

* Policies and Procedures
  + Definition of facility staff
  + Process to receive vaccine
  + Ensuring staff are fully vaccinated
  + Exemption process
  + Additional mitigation precautions for staff not fully vaccinated
  + Process for tracking and documentation of all doses of vaccine including booster doses
  + Documentation related to clinical contraindications for medical exemptions
  + Tracking and documentation of vaccine status for those whose vaccine must be temporarily delayed
  + Contingency plans for staff not fully vaccinated

**Some areas to be considered for COVID-19 Vaccine Program may include:**

* Staff Resources:
* Infection Preventionist
* Licensed Nurses
* All Staff
* Administrator
* Director of Nursing Services and designee
* Pharmacy Consultant
* Medical Director
* Education:
* Infection Control Practices and Prevention of Transmission
* Policies and Procedures for Infection Control
* COVID-19 Vaccine policy and procedure
* Proper use and application of Personal Protective Equipment
* Hand Hygiene procedures
* Resident Assessment
* Monitoring Residents for Side Effects and Severe Allergic Reactions
* Anaphylaxis Management
* Cleaning and Disinfection
* Reporting
* Documentation Considerations:
* Informed Consent
* Resident Assessment
* Side Effects and Severe Allergic Reactions
* Exemptions
* Temporary delayed vaccinations
* Tracking
* Reporting
* Reporting
  + Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS)
  + NHSN Reporting

**References and Resources:**

1Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. QSO-21-19-NH. Interim Final Rule – COVID-19 Vaccine Immunization Requirements for Residents and Staff. May 11, 2021: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-21-19-nh.pdf>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. COVID-19 Vaccines for Long-term Care Residents, Updated Nov. 18, 2022: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/LTCF-residents.html>

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. QSO-23-02-ALL, Revised Guidance for Staff Vaccination Requirements. October 26, 2022: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qs0-23-02-all.pdf>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Overview of COVID-19 Vaccines, Updated Nov. 1, 2022: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/overview-COVID-19-vaccines.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Stay Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines Including Boosters, Updated Nov. 1, 2022: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html>

United States Health and Human Services. Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS): <https://vaers.hhs.gov/>