Safe Visiting in Care Homes: United States Perspective

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Nursing Home Data
MedPAC: A Data Book: Health care spending and the Medicare program, July 2020, Section 8: Post-acute care (SNF, HH, IRF, LTACH)
https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/nursing-home-care.htm

- The total number of Skilled Nursing Facilities in the United States has been relatively unchanged over the last 5 years.
- Number of licensed beds: 1.7 million (2016)
- Number of NH residents: 1.3 million (2016)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home health agencies</td>
<td>12,346</td>
<td>12,204</td>
<td>11,844</td>
<td>11,783</td>
<td>11,356</td>
<td>-2.1%</td>
<td>-3.6%</td>
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<td>Inpatient rehabilitation facilities</td>
<td>1,182</td>
<td>1,188</td>
<td>1,178</td>
<td>1,170</td>
<td>1,152</td>
<td>-0.6%</td>
<td>-1.5%</td>
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<td>Long-term care hospitals</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>-3.4%</td>
<td>-3.9%</td>
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<td>Skilled nursing facilities</td>
<td>15,223</td>
<td>15,253</td>
<td>15,277</td>
<td>15,230</td>
<td>15,114</td>
<td>-0.2%</td>
<td>-0.8%</td>
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Note: The skilled nursing facility count does not include swing beds.
Source: MedPAC analysis of data from the Provider of Services files from CMS.
A large proportion of SNFs in the United States are for-profit nursing homes.
Nursing Home Regulations

• Federal
  • Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) 1987
  • CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services)
  • State Surveyors through Department of Health, Office of Licensure/Certification (OLC)
  • Rules of Participation (RoP) and State Operations Manual
• States
  • Each state has their own rules/regulations regarding nursing homes

* Important: These regulations pertain only to Nursing Homes. Not ALF.
Nursing Homes in COVID-19


Figure 3

Key CMS Nursing Home COVID-19 Guidance and Actions

- **2/6** Directs facilities to review CDC advisory & infection control policies
- **3/13** Issues visitor restrictions, PPE use, & cancelling group activities guidance
- **3/4 & 3/20** Postpones all routine facility inspections, to focus on infection control
- **4/02** Issues symptom screening & designating separate facilities for COVID-19 positive patients guidance
- **4/30** Announces Coronavirus Commission for Safety & Quality in Nursing Homes
- **5/8** Releases interim final rule requiring CDC & resident/family notification of COVID-19 cases & deaths
- **5/13** Releases recommendations & best practices toolkit
- **5/18** Issues facility reopening guidance
- **6/1** Issues guidance on COVID-19 surveys and enhanced infection control deficiency enforcement
- **6/25** Ends emergency blanket waiver of facility staffing data submission
- **7/10** Announces Quality Improvement Organizations to assist facilities in hotspots

NOTES: PPE = personal protective equipment.
CMS Memos

• CMS March 13, 2020 QSO-20-14-NH – “Visitor Restrictions”
• Guidance for Infection Control and Prevention of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Nursing Homes
• Guidance for Infection Control and Prevention of COVID-19 - CMS is providing additional guidance to nursing homes to help them improve their infection control and prevention practices to prevent the transmission of COVID-19, including revised guidance for visitation.
• Coordination with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and local public health departments - We encourage all nursing homes to monitor the CDC website for information and resources and contact their local health department when needed (CDC Resources for Health Care Facilities: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/index.html).
CMS Memos

- CMS May 18, 2020 QSO-20-30-NH – “Phased Reopening”
- Nursing Home Reopening Recommendations for State and Local Officials
- Recommendations for State and Local Officials:
- CMS is providing recommendations to help determine the level of mitigation needed to prevent the transmission of COVID19 in nursing homes. The recommendations cover the following items:
  - Criteria for relaxing certain restrictions and mitigating the risk of resurgence: Factors to inform decisions for relaxing nursing home restrictions through a phased approach.
  - Visitation and Service Considerations: Considerations allowing visitation and services in each phase.
  - Restoration of Survey Activities: Recommendations for restarting certain surveys in each phase.
CMS Memos

• **CMS September 17, 2020 QSO-20-39-NH – “Visitation Guidance”**
  - Nursing Home Visitation - COVID-19
  - Visitation Guidance: CMS is issuing new guidance for visitation in nursing homes during the COVID-19 PHE. The guidance below provides reasonable ways a nursing home can safely facilitate in-person visitation to address the psychosocial needs of residents.
  - Use of Civil Money Penalty (CMP) Funds: CMS will now approve the use of CMP funds to purchase tents for outdoor visitation and/or clear dividers (e.g., Plexiglas or similar products) to create physical barriers to reduce the risk of transmission during in-person visits

Status of Reopening

- New Restrictions imposed
- Paused
- Proceeding with Reopening
- Reopened

[Map of the United States showing state status of reopening.]
National Coordinated Response?
What to do?

• States have set up their own taskforces (health department, professional associations, clinicians) to interpret federal guidelines

• Regarding visiting practices

• Most are following the Sept 17, 2020 memo detailing the following requirements for indoor visitation
  1. No new NH-onset cases in last 14 days
  2. Not currently conducting outbreak testing
  3. Adhere to core principles of COVID-19 Infection Prevention
     1. Screening, hand hygiene, face covering, social distance, cohorting, testing
  4. Limit movement in facility
  5. Designate space, time, and number of visitors
  6. Follow community positivity
What about Health System Associated SNF?  
- SNF as Integrated Solutions in a Health Care Delivery System

Source: Sg2 and https://cjasn.asnjournals.org/content/8/4/687/tab-figures-data

Sg2 System of Care

Community-Based Care

- Retail Pharmacy
- E-visits
- Home Health
- Wellness and Fitness Center
- Urgent Care Center
- Diagnostic Imaging Center
- Advanced Health Home
- Specialty Clinic [1]
- Primary Care
- Community Partners
- Inpatient Rehab
- Skilled Nursing Facility

Acute Care

- Hospital
- Ambulatory Procedure Center

Post-Acute Care

- Hospice
- Home Health
- PCP
- PCP Case Mgmt
- Nephrology Case Mgmt
- Medical Director
- Dialysis Unit
- Pharmacy
- Nephrology Extenders
- Primary Nephrologist

[1] Specialists (e.g., cardiology) as well as specialty programs (e.g., palliative care)
Thinking about the Future

Figure 2. Commission Recommendation Framework

Coronavirus Commission Safety and Quality in Nursing Home Final Report – September 2020
QUESTIONS?

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