

**ISDH Long Term Care Newsletter**  
**Issue 2020-40**  
**June 5, 2020**

**Today's Issue:**

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The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is committed to taking critical steps to ensure America's nursing homes are prepared to respond to the threat caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **QSO-20-32-NH – Release of COVID-19 Nursing Home Data**

Nursing Home COVID-19 Information: CMS will post COVID-19 data submitted by facilities via the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN). The information was posted June 4 at the following locations:

- A link to the information in the "Spotlight" section of the [Nursing Home Compare](#) home page.
- The information is also available at: <https://data.cms.gov/stories/s/COVID-19-Nursing-Home-Data/bkwz-xpvg>

Consistent with CMS' commitment to transparency, CMS began posting the reported COVID-19 NHSN data for viewing by nursing home residents and families, facilities, stakeholders, and the general public. The information posted includes each facility's name, reported number of confirmed and suspected cases of COVID-19 (including residents and staff), residents death related to COVID-19, availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) and COVID-19 testing, and potential staffing shortage.

Complete Information: [QSO 20-32-NH – Release of COVID-19 Nursing Home Data](#)

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## QSO-20-33-NH – Posting of Nursing Home Inspection

Nursing Home Inspection: CMS will post health inspection (i.e. surveys) results that were conducted on or after March 4, which is the first date that CMS altered the way that inspections are scheduled and conducted. This includes inspections related to complaints and facility-related incidents (FRIs) that were triaged at the Immediate Jeopardy (IJ) level, and the streamlined Infection Control inspection process that was developed based on the guidance for preventing the spread of COVID-19.

- The information is available in the “Spotlight” section of the [Nursing Home Compare](#) home page posted on June 4.

CMS has a longstanding commitment to transparency and post state inspection findings and reports on the Nursing Home Compare website. With the survey prioritization that began on March 4, CMS will also be posting the results of the complaint investigations and targeted infection control surveys in a new, downloadable method. All surveys that were conducted on or after March 4, is available through a link on the Nursing Home Compare homepage. The link will take users to a file that includes the following information:

- A spreadsheet listing each health inspection conducted, the facility’s demographic information, and findings (i.e., citations) from the inspection.
- A file with the Statement of Deficiencies (CMS-2567) from each inspection at a facility level.
- A spreadsheet showing the number and percentage of surveys that each state has conducted.

This information was posted June 4 on [Nursing Home Compare](#) in the “Spotlight” section and will be updated monthly.

Complete Information: [QSO 20-33-NH Posting of Nursing Homes Inspection](#)

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## Essential Family Caregivers in Long-term Care Facilities (LTCF) Guidance

Beyond being a welcome visitor, many family members are critical partners in the ongoing care and both physical and emotional support of persons living in LTCFs including nursing homes and residential facilities (assisted living). The COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated the challenges of social isolation and loneliness in the long term care population. Although technology can help decrease loneliness for some residents, many with cognitive impairment, visual and/or hearing difficulties, and mobility limitations will still struggle to maintain connections with their loved ones during these times.

Recognizing the critical role family members and other outside caregivers often have in care and support of residents, it is recommended that LTCFs consider designating as Essential Family Caregivers (ECFs) those family members and other outside caregivers who, prior to visitor restrictions, were regularly engaged with the resident at least two or more times per week to provide companionship and/or assist with activities requiring one-on-one direction.

Guidelines and criteria for ECFs are available within the [Essential Family Caregivers in Long-term Care Facilities](#) guidance. Implementation of ECFs should be accompanied by

pre-planning and communications with facility staff, residents, and their designated representatives. LTCFs should provide information on plans for EFCs and the intended return of care and support by family members and outside caregivers needed by residents vs. general family visitation that will come at a later date.

**This policy will go into effect in one week on June 13, 2020.**

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## **Outdoor Family Visitation at Long Term Care Facilities FAQ**

The Indiana State Department of Health [2019 Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) website has been updated with new guidance for [Outdoor Family Visitation at Long-term Care Facilities](#). In addition, the website has now been updated with [Long-term Care Facility Outdoor Visitation FAQ](#). Additional questions can be emailed to [familyoutreach@isdh.in.gov](mailto:familyoutreach@isdh.in.gov) or voice message at 317-233-7176 (effective Tuesday, June 9, 2020).