LTC Newsletter 2023-02
Jan. 19, 2023

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Improving COVID-19 Outcomes in Nursing Homes Across America - An Audio Series From CMS

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released an audio series "Improving COVID-19 Outcomes in Nursing Homes Across America." We encourage you to listen to these podcasts as they provide useful information to help you talk to your residents about COVID-19 vaccination and therapeutic options.

- Conversations with the CMS CMO –The Facts Behind the Updated COVID-19 Vaccine: Safety and Efficacy https://youtu.be/XN5tdlGmNyo
- Conversations with the CMS CMO – Long-term Care Treatment Options for COVID-19 https://youtu.be/NqBi7GqNhkY
- Conversations with the CMS CMO – CDC Programs for COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Vaccination in Nursing Homes https://youtu.be/g9UFDHCP8YI

CHIRP Quick Reference Guide to Document Historical Vaccine Doses

The Children and Hoosier Immunization Registry Program (CHIRP) is a secure web-based application that works as an immunization registry program designed to permanently store a person's immunization records in electronic format. Please use [CHIRP-Quick-Reference-Guide.pdf (in.gov)](#) to document historical doses in CHIRP.

New State RAI Coordinator

As of Jan. 1, the Indiana State Resident Assessment Instrument (RAI) Coordinator was transitioned from Arron Caquelin to Christina Samuels. RAI/Minimum Data Set (MDS) assessment questions may be sent to Christina at csamuels@health.in.gov.

Temporary Nurse Licenses

The Indiana Professional Licensing Agency (PLA) [website](#) includes the following information regarding temporary nurse licenses:

> Requirements & Additional Information
> On March 19, 2020, Governor Eric Holcomb issued Executive Order 20-05 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This order, and its various extensions, permitted certain unlicensed healthcare practitioners to practice under a temporary license, and established a licensure registry to identify those practitioners who have been issued this temporary license.
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> To address Indiana's ongoing healthcare needs, this temporary license and the licensure registry were recently incorporated into state law under Indiana Code § 25-1-5.7, after Governor Holcomb signed House Enrolled Act 1003-2022 into law. Under this new law, this temporary license and the licensure registry are effective through the duration of the federal public health emergency concerning COVID-19, declared by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This declaration must be renewed every 90 days, and was last renewed on January 11, 2023.

What does this mean for your emergency registration? Unless otherwise notified by PLA, no action is required to preserve your emergency registration. The emergency registration issued to you under Governor Holcomb's various Executive Orders is identical to the license issued under Indiana Code §25-1-5.7.

PLA anticipates the emergency registry will remain valid until April 11 and anticipates that it will provide approximately 60 days notice before it expires.

If you have questions regarding the duration of your temporary license, please refer to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' [public health emergency declarations concerning COVID-19](#).

Reporting Outbreaks

As indicated within the IDOH Long-Term Care Abuse and Incident Reporting Policy, effective Dec. 8, facilities are required to report epidemic outbreaks of at least three residents with the same infection in one defined area (such as hall, unit, neighborhood, street, pod, secured unit, vent unit) in a 48-hour period; or 10% or more of the current building census with the same infection.

The [LTC Newsletter 2022-45](#) from Dec. 20, 2022, provides links to the IDOH Infection Prevention Program, which has links to the toolkits. At this time, the influenza toolkit available online still instructs providers to call IDOH to report. While we are waiting for the toolkits to be corrected, providers are reminded that outbreaks should be reported through the [Gateway](#) and not called in to IDOH.

As of July 1, 2015, incident reporting by email, fax or voicemail is not accepted. Incident reports, including reporting of communicable diseases and epidemic outbreaks, are to be submitted online via the Survey Report System in the [IDOH Gateway](#). For Questions or help accessing Gateway, please submit a [helpdesk ticket](#) or email srshelpdesk@isdh.in.gov.

Educational and Collaborative Opportunities

IHCA/Leading Age, IDOH and QSource have collaborated to support the following educational opportunities:

Mission Possible: SNF Department Head Briefing. This monthly series will address essential functions, quality care and department-specific management functions for department heads with sessions specific for administrators, directors of nursing (DONs), housekeeping, social services, activities, dietary, maintenance and therapy. Topics will include department-specific considerations for infection control, survey preparedness, role in meetings, IDT systems integration, MDS supportive documentation, care planning, driving QMs, employee satisfaction and customer service. CE approved by NAB for Administrators, social workers, nursing, occupational therapists, physical therapists, NCCAP for activities professionals and CBDM for dietary managers. [Register](#) today. The first webinar on Jan. 24 is all about the DON. Click [here](#) to register for this webinar only.

5-Star Work Plans. This 6-week webinar series examines the three domains of the CMS 5-Star Quality Rating System: Health Inspections, Staffing and Quality Measures including how the rating is calculated and analyzing facility data with a focus on developing a work plan to improve or

maintain 5-Star Status. [Read more.](#) CE approved for nurses, Administrators (NAB pending), social workers, occupational therapists and physical therapists. [Register today](#). The first webinar is Jan. 18.

Nursing Home Collaboratives. QSource would like to invite you to a virtual kickoff meeting to reintroduce the nursing home collaboratives in twelve regions throughout Indiana. We are excited to offer this opportunity to network and work collaboratively with other nursing homes in your area on Quality Improvement projects to assist in improving care in your facility and community.

Each collaborative will pick a QAPI project to focus on based on region-specific data provided by QSource. QSource Quality Improvement Advisors will assist in walking each collaborative group through the QAPI process with educational opportunities at each meeting. Each project will last 3-6 months and QSource will be facilitating the whole process from assisting in identifying missed opportunities to developing interventions to improve outcomes. There will be monthly meetings offered both virtually and/or in person to come together to discuss successes and/or barriers as well as track and trend the progress throughout the project period. These collaboratives will also help to improve and strengthen your facility's QAPI program.

Along the way, QSource will provide ongoing data as well as outcomes data at the end of each project. We will also take time to celebrate and showcase successes along the way, both big and small. We will be able to share projects from each region, interventions, successes, and barriers that they encountered for each of the improvement processes. We are very excited to work with each of you to help improve the quality of care for our residents throughout Indiana.

Please contact one of the following to register for the collaborative in your region.
[Teresa Hostettler](#) | [Candace Lord](#) | [Angeleta Hendrickson](#) | [Da'Wayna Grier](#)

CMS Memo QSO-23-05-NH

CMS released [QSO-23-05-NH](#) on Jan. 18, with updates to the Nursing Home Care Compare website and Five Star Quality Rating System. CMS will conduct audits of schizophrenia coding in the Minimum Data Set data and adjust the Nursing Home Care Compare quality measure star ratings for facilities whose audits reveal inaccurate coding. In addition, to be more transparent, CMS will now display citations under informal dispute on the Nursing Home Care Compare website.