



**COVID-19 Question and Answer Session
for Long-Term Care and Congregate Residential Settings**

January 8th, 2021

Housekeeping

- All attendees in listen-only mode
- Submit questions via Q&A pod to **All Panelists**
- Slides and recording will be made available later

Agenda

- Upcoming Webinars
- Update to Reporting POC Test Results
- COVID-19 LTC Vaccination Toolkit
- COVID-19 Vaccination Data Reporting
- LTC Vaccination Program Progress
- CMS Statement on LTC Visits and Visitation
- Open Q & A

Slides and recording will be made available after the session.

IDPH webinars

Upcoming Friday Brief Updates and Open Q&A 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Friday, January 15 th	https://illinois.webex.com/illinois/onstage/g.php?MTID=e91474feeb4b08eac5304c7f2e355905d
Friday, January 22 nd	https://illinois.webex.com/illinois/onstage/g.php?MTID=ea3eca54d5f2f0f381b6b05a26bccec8c
Friday, January 29 th	https://illinois.webex.com/illinois/onstage/g.php?MTID=eecf488703707600a663c6a8b89dce235

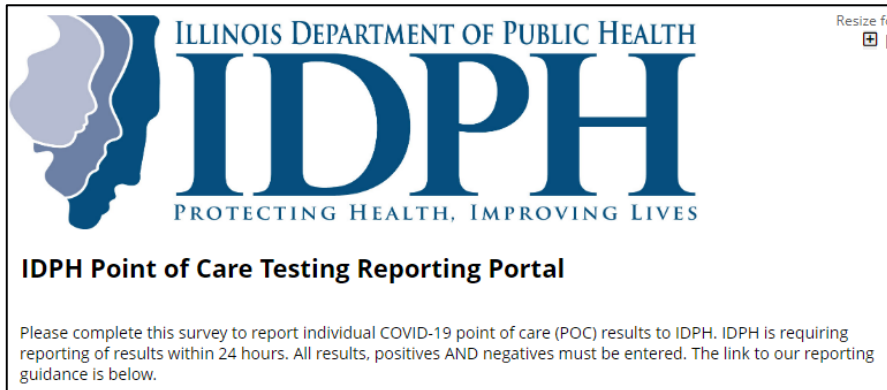
Previously recorded webinars can be viewed on the [IDPH Portal](#)

Slides and recordings will be made available after the sessions.

UPDATE: Reporting Point-of-Care (POC) Test Results



- Any facility conducting POC testing must report results to public health
- **Update 12/28/20:** CDC/CMS *prefer* that CMS-certified facilities use NHSN to report POC results, but are *no longer required* to use this pathway
- Use IDPH POC REDCap if not using NHSN



<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/nursing-homes-antigen-testing.html>



NEW: CDC LTC COVID-19 Vaccination Toolkit

Preparing
Staff

Preparing
Residents

Safety
Monitoring
and Reporting

FAQs

Example Resources for Encouraging LTC Staff Vaccination

Fact Sheet

LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY STAFF:
Answering Common Questions About COVID-19 Vaccines

Based on [recommendations](#) from the [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices \(ACIP\)](#), an independent panel of medical and public health experts, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that both healthcare personnel (HCP) and residents of long-term care facilities (LTCFs) be included among those offered the first supply of COVID-19 vaccines.

You are on the front lines and risk being exposed to COVID-19 each day on the job. Early vaccination can protect not only you from getting sick, but also help protect residents and your family members who may have underlying health conditions that put them at risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Q. Why is it important that LTCF staff receives COVID-19 vaccine, even if LTCF residents are vaccinated?

Receiving a COVID-19 vaccine is an important step to prevent getting sick with COVID-19 disease. HCP, including LTCF staff, were placed first in line to receive COVID-19 vaccine because of their essential role in fighting this deadly pandemic **and** their increased risk of getting COVID-19 and spreading it to their patients. The decision to get vaccinated protects more than just your health. It can also help protect your colleagues, facility residents, families, and communities.

Q. Will I still need to wear masks, gowns, or personal protective equipment in the facility after receiving COVID-19 vaccination?

Yes. COVID-19 vaccines will be an important tool to help stop the pandemic. However, staff members who have been vaccinated should continue to follow all [current guidance](#) to protect themselves and others, including proper use of [personal protective equipment](#). Because we need to use all the prevention tools available, you should continue to cover your nose and mouth with a [mask](#) when around others, [avoid close contact](#) with people who are sick, [stay 6 feet away from others](#), avoid crowds, and [clean your hands](#) often.


The combination of getting vaccinated and following CDC's recommendations to [protect yourself and others](#) will offer the best protection from COVID-19.

Q. Are COVID-19 vaccines being held to the same safety standards as other vaccines in the United States?

Yes. COVID-19 vaccines are being held to the same safety standards as all other vaccines. Several expert and independent groups evaluate the safety of vaccines being given to people in the United States. After a review of all the available information, CDC and [ACIP](#) agree that the lifesaving benefits of vaccinating LTCF residents against COVID-19 outweigh the possible risks.

Q. Can I feel confident that COVID-19 vaccines are safe?

Yes. The safety of COVID-19 vaccines is a top priority. COVID-19 vaccines are being held to the same safety standards as all other vaccines. All COVID-19 vaccines being administered to LTCF staff and residents were tested in clinical trials involving tens of thousands of people to make sure they meet safety standards and protect adults of different ages, races, and ethnicities. There were no serious safety concerns. CDC and the FDA will keep monitoring the vaccines to look for safety issues after they are authorized and in use.




www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19


Poster

LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY STAFF:
Reasons to Get Vaccinated Against COVID-19 Today

- 1 You are on the front lines and risk being exposed to people with COVID-19 each day on the job.
- 2 Protecting you also helps protect your residents and your family, especially those who may be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- 3 You matter to us and play an essential role in keeping your community healthy.



Lead the way!
Encourage your coworkers, residents, family, and friends to get vaccinated.



www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines

Additional Strategies

- Record facility leaders getting vaccinated
- Have staff champions talk to colleagues
- Organize contests or incentives

LTC Vaccination FAQs

Benefits of
Getting
Vaccinated

Considerations
Prior to Getting
Vaccinated

Getting
Vaccinated

After Getting
Vaccinated

Infection Control
& Testing
Considerations

Example FAQs

Should persons with a prior history of SARS-CoV-2 infection be vaccinated? What about those who are currently infected?

Vaccination should be offered to persons who previously had symptomatic or asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 infection.

However, persons with known current SARS-CoV-2 infection should not be vaccinated until they have recovered from acute illness (if they had symptoms) and after criteria have been met for them to discontinue isolation.

Example FAQs

Will residents still need to wear masks, and will HCP still need to wear personal protective equipment in the facility after receiving COVID-19 vaccination?

Yes. COVID-19 vaccines will be an important tool to help stop the pandemic. However, even after vaccination everyone should continue to follow all the [current guidance](#) to protect themselves and others. This includes wearing a [mask](#), [staying at least 6 feet away from others](#), avoiding crowds, following facility guidance on visitation and [infection control](#), and [clean hands often](#). CDC's current recommendations will continue to be the primary way that LTCF residents and HCP are protected until vaccination is widespread.

Example FAQs

After LTCF HCP are vaccinated, should they continue regular COVID-19 testing? —

Yes, facilities should continue to follow recommendations for [COVID-19 testing](#) in nursing homes. Experts need to understand more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide before deciding to change recommendations on steps everyone should take to slow the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19.

[COVID-19 vaccination](#) will not influence the results of viral (nucleic acid or antigen) COVID-19 tests. Positive tests should not be attributed to the COVID-19 vaccine.

NHSN Update - COVID-19 Vaccination Data Reporting

- New NHSN module available for facilities to track weekly COVID-19 vaccination data for residents and healthcare personnel.
- This reporting can help facilities monitor COVID-19 vaccination coverage over time.
- Training and more information available here: <https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/ltc/weekly-covid-vac/index.html>

CMS Statement on LTC Visits & Vaccination

Thank you for your tireless work to support nursing home residents. We are working hand-in-hand with our colleagues at the CDC and will discuss your email with them. I wanted to offer a quick comment to your suggestion below that, “Any resident that receives their full set of Covid vaccines needs to be granted the right to leave the facility with their family or friends without restrictions or the need to be placed in quarantine when they return to the facility.” Please note that residents always have the right to leave a facility. However, in order to prevent COVID-19 transmission, CMS does not recommend this and if a resident would like to leave the facility for more than 24 hours, we recommend facilities consider placing residents on transmission-based precautions upon return, which may include quarantine.

As the vaccine is deployed, we are evaluating its impact on COVID-19 transmission and all of our guidance, especially the visitation guidance. I can assure you, we want to enable more visitation between residents and their loved ones as soon as possible. Unfortunately at this time, even with the vaccine being deployed, the risk of transmission is still high and we need to maintain our existing vigilance and guidance to help prevent the transmission of COVID-19 as residents’ health and safety is our upmost priority. That said, the moment we’ve determined we can make a change, we will issue new guidance through a CMS memorandum that can be applied to all nursing homes nationwide.

Thank you again for your advocacy.

Evan Shulman
Director, Division of Nursing Homes
Quality Safety and Oversight Group
Center for Clinical Standards and Quality
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

Resident Rights

Comment:

“Any resident that receives their full set of Covid vaccines needs to be granted the right to leave the facility with their family or friends without restrictions or the need to be placed in quarantine when they return to the facility.”

CMS Response:

- Please note that residents always have the right to leave a facility.
- However, in order to prevent COVID-19 transmission, CMS does not recommend this and if a resident would like to leave the facility for more than 24 hours, we recommend facilities consider placing residents on transmission-based precautions upon return, which may include quarantine.

Vaccination & Rationale for Vigilance

Comment:

Any resident that receives their full set of Covid vaccines needs to be granted the right to leave the facility with their family or friends without restrictions or the need to be placed in quarantine when they return to the facility. This would help limit the risk of exposure to residents that have choose not to take the vaccine while restoring some of the rights of those who have been vaccinated.

CMS Response:

- As the vaccine is deployed, we are evaluating its impact on COVID-19 transmission and all of our guidance, especially the visitation guidance.
- I can assure you, we want to enable more visitation between residents and their loved ones as soon as possible.
- Unfortunately at this time, even with the vaccine being deployed, the risk of transmission is still high and we need to maintain our existing vigilance and guidance to help prevent the transmission of COVID-19 as residents' health and safety is our utmost priority.
- That said, the moment we've determined we can make a change, we will issue new guidance through a CMS memorandum that can be applied to all nursing homes nationwide.

Open Q&A

Submit questions via Q&A pod to **All Panelists**

Please do not resubmit a single question multiple times

Slides and recording will be made available after the session.

Reminders

- SIREN Registration
 - To receive situational awareness from IDPH, please use this link to guide you to the correct registration instructions for your public health related classification: <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/siren>

- NHSN Assistance:
 - Contact Telligen: **nursinghome@telligen.com**