

# Home Health and Staffing Agencies

How to stay safe while providing care at home, ICF, and ALF

Ensuring the health and safety of all persons and maintaining their highest level of well-being is our collective health care goal. In light of the recent spread of COVID-19, CMS and others are providing additional guidance to help control and prevent the spread of the virus. Key resources for **assisted living** and **other living facilities**, **home health services**, and **at-home care for individuals/families** are listed here.

**Assisted Living Facilities and other Nursing Care/Living Facilities** - Revised Guidance for Infection Control and Prevention of Coronavirus in nursing homes from CMS found at <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-14-nh-revised.pdf>

## Key strategies

- visitor restriction
- caregiver screening prior to entering
- cancellation of all group setting activities
- practicing social distancing
- promoting frequent hand hygiene

Efforts should be made to increase phone and virtual contact with persons in facilities where these limitations reduce their socialization opportunities. Plans should be made with EMS providers about revised processes for moving patients in or out of the facility. Agency and other staff who typically move from one facility to another should have limited mobility among facilities if possible.

Resources specific to the care of dementia patients in assisted living are provided by the Alzheimer's Association and can be accessed at [https://www.alz.org/help-support/caregiving/coronavirus-\(covid-19\)-tips-for-dementia-care](https://www.alz.org/help-support/caregiving/coronavirus-(covid-19)-tips-for-dementia-care)

**Home Health Services** - Guidance for Infection Control and Prevention Concerning Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Home Health Agencies (HHAs) can be found at <https://www.cms.gov/medicareprovider-enrollment-and-certificationsurvey/certificationgeninfo/policy-and-guidance-infection-control-and-prevention-concerning-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-home-health>

## Key strategies

- following infection prevention and control practices from the CDC
- not providing care when the health care provider has signs and symptoms of respiratory illness

Additional resources provided by the National Association for Home Care and Hospice may be found at <https://www.nahc.org/resources-services/coronavirus-resources/>

Resources specific to the care of dementia patients in the home are provided by the Alzheimer's Association and can be accessed at [https://www.alz.org/help-support/caregiving/coronavirus-\(covid-19\)-tips-for-dementia-care](https://www.alz.org/help-support/caregiving/coronavirus-(covid-19)-tips-for-dementia-care)

**At-home care** for families and people with COVID-19 – Information is posted at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-home-care.html>

#### Key strategies

- People should adhere to home isolation until the risk of secondary transmission is thought to be low
- Use of a separate bedroom where the patient can recover without sharing immediate space with others
- The patient and other household members have access to appropriate, recommended personal protective equipment (at a minimum, gloves, and facemask) and are capable of adhering to precautions recommended as part of home care or isolation (e.g., respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette, hand hygiene)

Resources specific to the care of dementia patients at home are provided by the Alzheimer's Association and can be accessed at [https://www.alz.org/help-support/caregiving/coronavirus-\(covid-19\)-tips-for-dementia-care](https://www.alz.org/help-support/caregiving/coronavirus-(covid-19)-tips-for-dementia-care)

#### Other resources related to senior care

National Association of Home Care & Hospice

<https://www.nahc.org/resources-services/coronavirus-resources/>

Guidance for Infection Control and Prevention Concerning Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Home Health Agencies (HHAs) <https://www.cms.gov/medicareprovider-enrollment-and-certificationsurvey/certificationgeninfo/policy-and-guidance-infection-control-and-prevention-concerning-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-home-health>

Home Health Emergency Preparedness planning, plans, templates

[https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/FINALHOME\\_HEALTH\\_EMERGENCY\\_PREPAREDNESS\\_PL\\_2FINAL\\_484105\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/FINALHOME_HEALTH_EMERGENCY_PREPAREDNESS_PL_2FINAL_484105_7.pdf)

How to prevent skin injuries from wearing N95 masks. Pressure Injury Prevention during Prone and Skin Manifestations with COVID-19. <https://npiap.com/>

Tool to use for End of Life Discussions. <https://theconversationproject.org/covid19/>

As Nursing Home communities look to open up, this provides guidance on when Home Health and Hospice can resume full care in the LTC communities. <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-30-nh.pdf>