



For Immediate Release

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AHCA/NCAL Issues Guidance on Reporting COVID-19 Cases in Skilled Nursing Facilities and Assisted Living Communities

Washington, D.C. - Mark Parkinson, President & CEO of the American Health Care Association and the National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL) issued the following statement regarding reporting confirmed cases of COVID-19 in long term care facilities:

“Long term care providers are doing everything they can to reduce the risk of COVID-19 outbreaks and to limit the spread of the virus. Nursing homes and assisted living communities have acted on those things we can control, such as limiting visitation early on in this pandemic and actually ahead of social distancing containment measures implemented in many larger communities.

“This is an extremely stressful time for residents, their loved ones, and our staff members. Health care workers in long term care are putting their lives on the line every day for their residents. Meanwhile, long term care providers continue to desperately seek the resources that will help them battle this virus, including personal protective equipment. As this virus continues to spread, it is critical that we get long term care staff the proper PPE to ensure their safety at work.

“Today, AHCA/NCAL updated guidance to long term care providers about the need to notify their state survey agency about COVID positive residents and staff. We encourage this information be shared with CMS, CDC and FEMA. We believe this information can help identify long term care providers who are most in need of testing and PPE resources. Our guidance will recommend the following for all nursing homes and assisted living communities to:

- 1) Report each COVID-19 positive test result for resident and staff cases to the state survey agency, in addition to current health department reporting requirements.
- 2) Notify all residents, families and staff when the facility has its first confirmed COVID-19 case.

“Since the beginning of the pandemic, long term care facilities have recognized that communication with residents, families, staff and others is important, especially after a confirmed COVID-19 case. Nursing homes and assisted living communities have been following [CDC guidance](#) on how facilities should report a confirmed case and educating families. CMS has released [similar guidance](#). We have frequently shared with our members sample letters and communication documents for use communicating with families, friends, staff and residents on the developing situation within their buildings.

“We encourage CMS to use this data, in collaboration with other federal agencies, to help target PPE and testing resources that long term care providers desperately need. Without testing it will be hard to keep state and federal agencies apprised of how this virus is spreading and get the help facilities desperately need. Working together with state and federal governments and other partners, we agree that we need to do everything we can to minimize that risk. It’s clear that CMS shares our goal of containing the virus and limiting the spread as much as possible and this information can help in those efforts.”

For more information, please visit www.ahcancal.org/coronavirus.

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ABOUT AHCA/NCAL

The American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL) represents more than 14,000 non-profit and proprietary skilled nursing centers, assisted living communities, post-acute centers and homes for individuals with intellectual and development disabilities. By delivering solutions for quality care, AHCA/NCAL aims to improve the lives of the millions of frail, elderly and individuals with disabilities who receive long term or post-acute care in our member facilities each day. For more information, please visit www.ahcancal.org or www.ncal.org.