



## **BEST PRACTICES FOR ONGOING SURVEILLANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF COVID-19 IN SKILLED NURSING AND REHABILITATION CENTERS**

### **Visitation:**

- Currently, visits can take place outside with social distancing, physical barriers, and visitors must wear masks.
- Some centers will struggle with outside visitation due to the physical layout of the building.
- In the future, inside visits will be possible, optimally in open common areas such as foyers with social distancing, physical barriers, masks, and cleaning of space after each visit; also subject to the physical layout limitations of the center.

**NOTE:** Providers should not transport a patient or resident through 90 percent of the center for a visit; it is important to keep social distancing in place and take in to account the health status of the patient or resident.

### **Testing:**

- Ongoing staff testing is needed.
- Ideally, the State government would continue to coordinate tests, labs, logistics, and costs.
- Testing triggers should be linked to frequency of the virus in the community at-large, timing should be relative to results availability (if testing takes 3-5 days, then you don't want the frequency to be such that you are testing staff a second time before you get the results from the prior testing).
- Testing all residents should only be done if there are new cases of COVID-19 happening in the facility or when community levels of COVID-19 are high.
- Hospital discharges should be tested before discharge, and placed in observation in the SNF for 14 days.

**NOTE:** The virus enters the building by people coming in. It spreads in the building based on the number of interactions between people (staff to staff; staff to resident; resident to staff; etc). Therefore, social distancing and source control masks are critical to lowering the spread. Preventing people with the virus from entering (visitors, staff, consultants, residents, etc) is critical. Screening and testing are not job-based or role-based, but needs to apply to everyone coming into the building.

### **Personal Protective Equipment:**

- N-95 masks need to be used given how the virus spreads.
- CDC enhanced barrier precautions should also be used when COVID-19 or a person with symptoms appears on a unit.
- Normal levels of PPE are still not yet available across the country.
- In addition to PPE, one needs to consider how to decrease the total number of interactions a resident has, particularly with decreasing the number of different people they interact with (a resident with 10 interactions with 1 person vs. another with 10 interactions with 10 different people have different risk of exposure).