

Great Plains Quality Care Coalition

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Great Plains Quality Innovation Network Nursing Home Quality

Nursing Home Infection Prevention & Control: Key Resources

➔ **CMS Nursing Home Resource Center:** <https://www.cms.gov/nursing-homes>

[Risk Assessment for Healthcare Workers Exposed to Persons with COVID-19](#) Assess the extent of your healthcare workers' community exposure and/or patient exposure and overall risk of contracting COVID-19.

Visitation

Review CMS' guidance to State Survey Agencies on [Nursing Home Visitation](#) and consult with state and local partners, as needed, to explore ways to effectively and safely implement indoor and outdoor visitation.

[Risk Assessment Template](#) for when the resident has a community visit. This should be used as a template for making sure you are following your state's requirements for proper infection prevention procedures after a resident returns to the nursing home from a community visit (medical or non-medical).

Vaccination

[CDC COVID-19 Long-Term Care Facilities Vaccination Resources](#)

[CDC Infection Control After Vaccination](#)

Vaccinate with Confidence

- [CDC Vaccinate with Confidence](#)
- [Building Healthcare Personnel Confidence](#)
- [AHCA #Get Vaccinated Communications Toolkit](#)
- [Institute for Healthcare Improvement \(IHI\) Vaccine Conversation](#)

★ Visit the [Great Plains QIN Web site](#) for more long-term care vaccination resources.

Infection Control Assessments

- [Infection Prevention and Control Assessment Tool for Long-term Care Facilities](#)
- [CMS-Long Term Care Infection Control Worksheet-Facility Self-Assessment Tool](#)
- [SPICE Excel Template Risk Assessment for LTC](#)

Infection Control Training

Provide regular and frequent infection control training to all staff including administration. Implementing a schedule for these types of trainings can assist with planning. For access to on-line and in-person training opportunities, the facility may contact Great Plains Quality Innovation Network or local and/or state Health Department for recommendations or take advantage of federal options, including those listed below:

- [CMS Targeted COVID-19 Training for Frontline Nursing Home Staff and Management](#)
(QSEP Scenario-based Training)
 - ✓ Frontline staff – hand hygiene and PPE; screening and surveillance; cleaning the nursing home; cohorting; caring for residents with dementia in a pandemic

- ✓ Management – five frontline staff modules; basic infection control; emergency preparedness and surge capacity; addressing emotional health of residents and staff; telehealth for nursing homes; getting your vaccine delivery system ready
- [CMS-CDC Fundamentals of COVID-19 Prevention for Nursing Home Management](#)
- CDC Videos for Training Front Line Long-Term Care Staff:
 - ✓ [Keep COVID-19 Out](#)
 - ✓ [Clean Hands: Combat COVID-19](#)
 - ✓ [Closely Monitor Residents for COVID-19](#)
 - ✓ [Use Personal Protective Equipment Correctly for COVID-19](#)
 - ✓ [Sparkling Surfaces: Stop COVID-19's Spread](#)

Auditing | Surveillance

Develop a system for observing and providing feedback to staff on adherence to standard IPC measures, including hand hygiene and selection, cleaning and disinfection of shared resident equipment and correct use of PPE. Additional healthcare personnel - such as CNAs, environmental services workers or nursing managers may be useful to help make observations along with the IP.

Use data collected from observations to inform selection and delivery of education that improve compliance. Aggregating auditing data can identify common characteristics that might predict care gaps in your nursing home.

Great Plains QIN created a [Performance Tracker](#) to assist in aggregating your auditing data. [Access a video tutorial](#) on how to utilize this tool.

Top 3 risk areas for spread of infection are PPE Donning/Doffing, Hand Hygiene and Environmental Cleaning.

Audit environmental cleaning practices. [Multiple options](#) exist for auditing the cleaning and disinfection of environmental surfaces and resident care equipment. Auditing may occur through direct observation of staff in the process of cleaning and disinfecting. Additionally, tools such as fluorescent markers or clear laundry detergent with optical brightening agents (fluoresce under a black light) can be an inexpensive way to evaluate the cleaning process.

Staff can perform audits of high touch surfaces like doorknobs, light switches, bedside tables, and railings, among other surfaces. A small amount of fluorescent marker (or laundry detergent) can be applied to these surfaces and allowed to dry. After the room is cleaned, staff can observe these surfaces with a black light to evaluate the effectiveness of the cleaning process. If the surfaces are cleaned adequately, facility can use this practice as an educational tool with staff to improve practices. [CDC checklist to aid in cleaning audits](#)

[AHRQ Competency Check -vs- Observational Audit](#). This document explains the difference between the competency check you complete to meet education and regulatory compliance for your nursing home and the observational audits that you complete as part of the ongoing Quality Assurance Performance Improvement (QAPI) process.

[AHRQ Observational Audits Tool](#). Audits should focus on one aspect of infection prevention at a time, for example, hand hygiene, personal protective equipment (PPE) use, or environmental cleaning. This tool will help with observational auditing so you have useful data to guide improvement.

Personal Protecting Equipment (PPE)

Ensure that [donning](#) and [doffing](#) of PPE take place in separate areas on each resident cohort unit (e.g., red, yellow, green; or, COVID-positive, observation and COVID-negative) and that staff are adequately trained in the [donning and doffing of all PPE](#) to prevent contamination when donning/doffing. Access general guidance, posters, and training videos on PPE donning and doffing [here](#).

Review [CDC guidance](#) for extended wear and re-use of N95s, KN95s, and other respirators, including not using more than 5 uses and storing in a paper bag when not at use in the facility.

[NETEC COVID-19 PPE Donning/Doffing Posters](#)

[Guide My PPE Web App](#). This NETEC web application is designed to give care providers much-needed illustrated guidance for donning and doffing PPE.

PPE 101 – PPE 104 Modules with Continuing Education (CE):

- [PPE 101: The Basics of Standard Precautions](#)
Identifies the key principles of Standard Precautions practice in the healthcare environment and reviews appropriate and effective PPE use.
- [PPE 102: Transmission-Based Precautions](#)
Describes the different types of Transmission-Based Precautions, the PPE that should be used for these enhanced precautions and how to implement and apply these practices.
- [PPE 103: Training Frontline Health Care Professionals and Auditing Practices](#)
Reviews strategies to coach and train frontline healthcare professionals in the use of PPE and strategies for auditing appropriate PPE use to identify gaps and improve PPE adherence.
- [PPE 104: Auditing and Feedback of PPE Use](#)
Reviews strategies for healthcare precautions and auditing appropriate PPE use to prevent Healthcare-Associated Infections (HAIs).

Shortages | Conservation PPE or Preserving PPE

Facility should [implement strategies](#) to conserve PPE when shortages are anticipated or being experienced. Estimate needed supplies using the [CDC PPE Burn Rate Calculator](#). If your facility does not have a sufficient supply of PPE, contact your Department of Health or your local incident management structure to acquire needed supplies.

- [CDC guidance for extended wear and re-use of N95s, KN95s, and other respirators](#), including not more than 5 uses and storing in a paper bag when not at use in the facility.
- [CDC guidance for extended wear and re-use of eye protection](#), including cleaning, disinfecting and re-using face shields.
- [CDC guidance for optimizing gown supplies](#), including shifting to cloth isolation gowns or coveralls, extended use of isolation gowns, and re-use of cloth isolation gowns.

Hand Hygiene

Ensure that healthcare personnel clean their hands throughout resident care, including:

- Before contact with a resident, even if gloves will be worn
- After contact with the resident
- After contact with blood, body fluids, or contaminated surfaces or equipment
- Before performing an aseptic task, such as emptying a foley catheter
- Immediately after removing gloves

Failure to clean hands at appropriate times may allow illnesses including COVID-19 to spread among residents.

Information about hand hygiene in healthcare settings is available on the CDC [Clean Hands Count](#) website. [Access this training resource for hand hygiene observations.](#)

[CDC Hand Hygiene Videos](#)

[APIC Clean Your Hands](#)

Cleaning | Disinfection

Thoroughly and frequently clean high-touch surfaces to reduce contamination of environmental surfaces and transmission of pathogens, including COVID-19.

- Assess access to cleaning/disinfection products and build into staff workflow. [CDC training video for staff](#)
- [CDC guidance on cleaning and disinfecting facilities](#)
- [List of disinfectants that can be used for COVID-19](#)
- [Identifying Hazards and Mitigating Risks for Long Term Care Facilities](#)

Testing

Review and ensure all staff and leadership are familiar with CDC's guidelines for testing in nursing homes, including testing protocols for testing residents in the context of an outbreak (defined as a single new case of SARS-CoV-2 infection in any HCP or a nursing home-onset SARS-CoV-2 infection in a resident). Similarly, ensure staff and leadership are familiar with CDC's guidelines for using POC antigen testing strategies in nursing homes so that the facility is prepared to integrate antigen testing into its overall testing strategy when the POC machine arrives.

[CDC Testing Guidelines for Nursing Homes](#)

[CDC Considerations for Use of SARS-CoV-2 Antigen Testing in Nursing Homes](#)

Social Distancing

Continue to implement and enforce social distancing measures (remaining at least 6 feet apart from others):

- Remind residents to social distance, wear a cloth face covering (if tolerated) and perform hand hygiene.
- Remind healthcare professionals to social distance and wear a mask (for source control) when in break rooms or common areas.
- Install visual cues at 6-foot intervals (e.g., floor markings, wall markings, signs,) in areas where residents and/or staff congregate (lobby, dining room, hallways, residents' activity room).

Cohorting

Cohorting - [Access CDC's full guidance](#)

Healthcare Staff Shortage | Exposure Plan

Ensure that your facility has a plan in the event of healthcare personnel shortages. Healthcare personnel shortages may arise due to illness, staff no longer reporting to work and personal conflicts (i.e., childcare or elder care). The CDC has created guidance to assist healthcare facilities with [mitigating staffing shortages](#).

Supporting Staff

Support staff mental, emotional, and physical health through ongoing expressions of appreciation and facilitating access to resources that address stress and burnout.

- [AHCA/NCAL's Tips on Supporting Staff During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [CDC's Healthcare Personnel and First Responders: How to Cope with Stress and Build Resilience During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [COVID-19 Healthcare Resilience Task Force's Health Promotion to Enhance Healthcare Worker Performance](#)
- [Taking Care of People Outside of the Hospital Setting \(Chapter Four\)](#)

CDC's NHSN

NHSN provides healthcare facilities, such as LTC, with customized system to track infections and prevention process measures in a systematic way. Tracking allows facilities to identify problems, improve care, and determine progress toward national healthcare-associated infection goals.

The [NHSN Long-term Care Facility Component](#) is supporting the nation’s COVID-19 response through the COVID-19 Module for LTCFs. Facilities eligible to report into the [COVID-19 Module](#) include nursing homes/skilled nursing, long-term care for the developmentally disabled and assisted living facilities.

[CDC/NHSN Surveillance for Weekly HCP & Resident COVID-19 Vaccination](#) Long-term care facilities can track weekly COVID-19 vaccination data for residents and healthcare personnel through NHSN.



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