



Great Plains Quality Care Coalition
Nursing Home E-News: **Nuts & Bolts**
Better Together
May 2021 | Issue 16

Great Plains Quality Care Coalition Update

Join us for the 3rd event in the Learning and Action Series, Medication Safety: **What Matters Most, May 18, 2021, 3:00 - 4:00 pm CT**. Dr. Lufei Young, RN, APRN-NP, Associate Professor; Augusta University, College of Nursing will introduce three models underlying medication safety, review treatment processes guided by each model and discuss actual and potential outcomes for patients, caregivers, and the healthcare system. Details, registration, recordings, and handouts can be accessed here: [GPQIN Medication Safety Series](#). *This event is part of the Great Plains Quality Care Coalition/ Medication Safety Collaborative Action Series*

Education, Training, Resources

[Visit our GPQIN Event Calendar](#) to access both upcoming and past events.

[Great Plains QIN Medication Safety LAN Webinar: What Matters Most](#)
May 18, 2021, 3-4 pm CT

[Great Plains QIN Office Hours: Improve Your Vaccination Quality Measures - Grab the Low Hanging Fruit](#)
May 25, 2021, 2-3pm CT

[Great Plains QIN Medication Safety Action Group: Ask the Experts](#)
June 15, 2021 3-4pm CT

[Great Plains QIN Nursing Home Quality Webpage](#) has many resources organized by topic including past Nuts & Bolts Newsletters and Quality Measure Video Series



National Nurses week begins May 6th and ends on May 12, 2021, which is the birthday week of Florence Nightingale, who was known as the “Lady with the Lamp” because of her habit of making rounds at night. This special week we raise awareness of all nurse contributions and acknowledge the vital role nurses play in society.

May 9 through 15, 2021 is National Skilled Nursing Care Week. This year’s theme, “Together Through the Seasons” honors the collaborative commitment of skilled nursing care facilities and their staff in providing compassionate care to their residents during this unprecedented time.

On behalf of Great Plains QIN, we recognize and thank all nurses and all nursing home staff for the incredible and steadfast commitment to providing quality care and ensuring the safety of residents throughout North Dakota and South Dakota. Despite tiring days, we see amazing strength in you! We are so honored to work with the best group of people in the nation! This song [You Didn't Have To - Bing video](#) sums up perfectly in 2:48 minutes our gratitude and admiration for you.

We hope you will take some time to commemorate these special weeks by recognizing all your nurses, your staff, your residents, and the special relationships between all those that that make up your communities. It likely will be different than in previous years but it likely will be even more special after we have all been through. ~ Great Plains QIN

CMS [Nursing Home Resource Center](#) serves as a centralized hub with the latest information and guidance.

[CMS Toolkit on State Actions to Mitigate COVID-19 Prevalence in Nursing Homes](#). National best practices, including those from North and South Dakota.

[The National Partnership – Dementia Care Resources](#)
Bookmark this site and explore.

CMS Five Star Rating | Quality Measure Quick Resource Links

[Five Star Quality Rating | CMS](#)
[Care Compare | CMS](#)
[Quality Measures | CMS](#)
[SNF QRP | CMS](#)
[SNF VBP | CMS](#)
[MDS 3.0 RAI Manual | CMS](#)

Vaccine Hesitancy: One Home's Personal Journey

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented the world with many challenges; arguably, the impact has been greatest on those who reside and provide care in our long-term care settings. Vaccinations give us hope that we can turn the page and no longer fear COVID-19 and the devastating impact on quality and loss of life. The COVID-19 vaccines have been available to essential workers for nearly six months; science and medicine have proven the vaccines are safe and effective. So, why are we not seeing higher rates of vaccination among healthcare workers?



April Peyer, Infection Preventionist with Missouri Slope Lutheran Care Center in Bismarck, ND, shared some of the struggles and concerns she has in her attempts to increase vaccine confidence. Missouri Slope is the largest long-term care facility in North Dakota; employing 470 individuals. As of the time of this article, Missouri Slope is sitting at a 51% vaccination rate of their staff.

“COVID has been devastating for us; we lost many residents this past year. We lost married couples and individuals who had a lot to live for. Every death was a painful loss for our staff. We also had residents diagnosed with COVID and then recovered; however, these residents still experience many lasting effects from the disease,” Peyer stated.

Read more about Missouri Slope's vaccine efforts, resources, and challenges. [Access the full article.](#)



COVID 19 Staff Vaccination Ambassador Campaign by Great Plains QIN

The hesitation and low staff vaccination rate are not unique to Missouri Slope Lutheran Home. Great Plains QIN is celebrating and recognizing organizations with high staff COVID-19 vaccination rates throughout North Dakota and South Dakota through the recently launched, [COVID Staff Vaccination Ambassador Program](#). **Congratulations** to the nursing homes who have reached the 75% vaccination mark. We know this is not easy and your efforts are to be celebrated.

This effort began with nursing homes and is now being extended to community healthcare partners and service organizations. All responses are self-reported and voluntary through a [Staff Vaccination Inquiry Form](#). If you have not completed the inquiry or have updated numbers, please submit/resubmit as the ambassador listing will be updated weekly.

Ambassadors will be highlighted on the Great Plains QIN Web site, provided a certificate and a press release template that can be used in local media recognizing this accomplishment. There is great value in sharing what has worked well, barriers encountered and helpful resources to assist in increasing staff vaccination rates.



Music and Memory Relaunches in North Dakota and South Dakota

Research from multiple studies shows the profound effect personalized music can have on individuals with deteriorating brain function, such as those with dementia, Alzheimer's and other types of cognitive loss. [Music & Memory](#)® is an organization equipped to train professionals how to design personalized music playlists for their residents. This approach has been associated with a reduction in the amount of antipsychotic medication taken by nursing home residents as well as a decrease in distressed behaviors.

South Dakota Foundation for Medical Care (SDFMC) and Quality Health Associates of North Dakota (QHA) have assisted facilities across their respective states in the implementation of Music & Memory over the past few years. Both organizations have received CMP funding to relaunch their programs. SDFMC is eight months into their relaunch, and QHA received notification of funding in late April. Updates for each state can be found below.



North Dakota

Music & Memory Support is BACK in North Dakota

QHA, as part of the ND Partnership to Improve Dementia Care, is pleased to announce the relaunch of Music & Memory in North Dakota. Thirty-one ND nursing homes were previously certified, and QHA will be assisting those facilities with recertification and technical assistance. QHA is also seeking to recruit twenty new facilities. Those new to the program will receive training, equipment, certification and renewal fees, and technical assistance. For additional information, please contact Geneal Roth, groth@qualityhealthnd.org, 701-989-6225 or Michelle Lauckner, mlauckner@qualityhealthnd.org, 701-989-6229.



South Dakota

South Dakota Music & Memory Phase 2 Update

Seventy-one nursing homes in South Dakota were previously certified in Music & Memory facilitated by SDFMC through CMP funding. SDFMC has secured additional CMP funding for Phase 2 with the goal to provide the remaining 41 South Dakota nursing homes the opportunity to obtain Music & Memory certification, equipment, and technical assistance.

Eight months into Phase 2, twenty-two additional nursing homes have completed the training and are beginning to implement the personalized music program to their residents. Each trained facility receives a laptop computer and equipment to provide fifteen residents with individualized music devices, national certification and renewal fees, training, technical assistance, and facility scholarships to attend one of South Dakota's healthcare trade associations' fall conferences.

For more information or to sign up for participation in the South Dakota Music & Memory program, please contact Denise Kolba, SDFMC, denise.kolba@sdfmc.org or 605-310-6792.

Avantara North, Rapid City, SD became certified in Music & Memory last Fall. Mary Schieckoff, Activities Director, states "We have a resident who cries often. During those times we begin her Music & Memory playlist with the music she loves. She closes her eyes and before long calm comes with a look of peace as she listens to the music. It seems people can always relate to music. Music helps people to forget the troublesome thoughts in their head and helps them focus on the tune and/or lyrics and hopefully the good memories associated with it."

Updated CMS / CDC Guidance – Restrictions Easing (testing, visitation, activities)

The CMS and the CDC updated guidance for long-term care facilities based on resident and staff COVID-19 vaccination status are easing. Some of the following key changes are:

- Residents and visitors may visit without distancing and source control masks if alone in the resident's room and the resident and visitor are fully vaccinated. If the visitor is not vaccinated, they can visit with a fully vaccinated resident alone in a resident's room without distancing while wearing well-fitting source control masks.
- Communal dining and activities may occur without physical distancing if all residents are vaccinated.
- Vaccinated health care personnel (HCP) no longer need to undergo routine COVID-19 testing, but should continue to be tested after exposure, during an outbreak, or if experiencing symptoms.
- In general, fully vaccinated HCP should continue to wear source control while at work. However, fully vaccinated HCP could dine and socialize together in break rooms and conduct in-person meetings without source control or physical distancing. If unvaccinated HCP are present, everyone should wear source control and unvaccinated HCP should physically distance from others.

AHCA/NCAL has provided a detailed [summary](#) of these recent updates.

Official new guidance found here:

- [CMS QSO 20-39-NH Memo on Nursing Home Visitation revised 4/27/21](#)
- [CMS QSO 20-38 NH Memo on Testing- Revised 4/27/21](#)
- [CDC Healthcare Infection Prevention & Control Recommendations in Response to COVID19 Vaccination Updated 4/27/2021](#)



Pregnancy Increases COVID-19 Risk: Vaccination Available and Recommended

The Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) confirms pregnancy increases the risk of severe illness from COVID-19, which may result in intensive care admission, mechanical ventilation or death. While initial clinical trials excluded pregnant people, vaccine rollout studies confirmed the safety of antibody formation caused by vaccination during the development of the placenta and throughout pregnancy. As of April 19, more than 94,000 V-safe participants received COVID-19 vaccination while pregnant and lacked any adverse events.

“Encourage your staff to talk with their doctors or primary care providers to determine what is best for them and their baby,” recommended Tammy Wagner, RN, GPQIN Quality Improvement Advisor.

Those with questions about COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy may contact [MotherToBaby](#) by phone (1-866-626-6847) or by chat (<https://mothertobaby.org/>) to talk with an expert in English or Spanish. This free and confidential service is available Monday-Friday 8 AM-5 PM ET.

COVID-19 Vaccine During Pregnancy Resources:

- [CDC Information about COVID-19 Vaccines for People who are Pregnancy or Breastfeeding](#)
- [V-safe COVID-19 Vaccine Pregnancy Registry](#)
- [Myths and Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines](#)

To request assistance to increase vaccine confidence, contact [Dee Kaser](#) or [Tammy Wagner](#).



MDS Tip: Vaccination Quality Measures are Low Hanging Fruit

Take time to review Great Plains QIN's [Influenza and Pneumococcal Quality Measure Videos](#). The videos are less than 30 minutes and include handouts and several handy resources to assist the MDS coder and infection preventionist in organization and tracking. The **Influenza and Pneumococcal Vaccination Quality Measures are Low Hanging Fruit! You are in control of these two QMs!**

In these immunization quality measures, even if a resident refused or has medical contraindications; if they have been assessed and offered the vaccine, they are considered "appropriately given." These measures consider a resident's right to refuse. Your quality measure rate will not go down if the resident refuses or not given because of medical contraindications, but you must assess and offer.

TIME SENSITIVE: For the Influenza QM, the data will be pulled **ONLY once per year** and the percentage of residents who were assessed and appropriately given the seasonal influenza vaccine will remain on [CMS Care Compare](#) for **the entire year**. On **June 30**, the data will be pulled for the most recent flu season, broadly recognized as October 1 through March 31.



Save the Date: Tuesday, 5/25/2021, 2:00 - 3:00 pm CT for an office hour call with GPQIN Quality Improvement Advisors, Michelle Lauckner and Lori Hintz
Topic: Improve Your Vaccination QM's: Grab the Low Hanging Fruit
[Registration and Details](#)

Updated ND and SD Completion Stats re: Targeted COVID-19 NH (QSEP) Scenario Based Trainings

The CMS [Targeted COVID-19 Training for Nursing Homes](#) on the CMS Quality, Safety and Education Portal (QSEP) webpage has seen a significant uptick in completions since December 2020 across the Great Plains QIN service area. The scenario-based trainings are available on-demand online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There are 5 modules for frontline staff and 10 modules for nursing home management. Modules

Date	North Dakota completions		South Dakota completions	
	# of Staff	# of NH's	# of Staff	# of NH's
12/12/2020 (Baseline)	1,293	37	1,196	69
2/17/2021	2,078	42	7,283	104
3/28/2021	2,227	51	7,299	104
4/11/2021	2,271	52	7,305	104

include best practices for containing and preventing the spread of COVID-19 in nursing homes. Those that complete the trainings will receive a certificate of completion. The goal is that every nursing home employee across the United States will complete this training.

[Click here](#) for a tutorial to further explain the registration process. **Newly added in the tutorial is guidance for taking the modules as a group, and a link to access the front-line care worker modules in Spanish.**

Updated Stats! The table shows the breakdown of training completions for North Dakota and South Dakota as of 4/11/21. Nationally at baseline, 193,268 individuals from nursing homes completed the QSEP Scenario Based Trainings (SBTs). Seventeen weeks later (week of 4/11/21), 336,313 individuals from nursing homes have completed the QSEP SBTs; equating to a 74.0% increase in individuals trained across the nation.

TIP! Consider incorporating this training in your orientation curriculum, and or using it as re-education resource whenever needed. This would be a great marketing promotion for individual nursing homes that 100% of their employees have completed national training on infection control and prevention. Contact [Lori Hintz](#) or [Michelle Lauckner](#) to know how many staff completed from your facility. **KUDOS!**

Activity Ideas as COVID Restrictions Ease

Submitted by Alzheimer's Association of Minnesota/North Dakota and South Dakota

As COVID-19 restrictions begin to ease in some places, some senior living communities may still have visitation restrictions that allow visitation only in a resident's room. We know friends and family members may be looking to staff for dementia friendly activity ideas that could be done in their room or a small space, to create a meaningful visit.

First, consider the following with each visit:

- What do they like to do?
- What are they able to do?
- What are they in the mood for today?

Activity ideas for an in-room visit:

- Listen to the person's favorite music
- Look at family photo albums
- Prepare afternoon tea
- Watch a favorite sport on television
- Model with play dough
- Play checkers or dominos
- Name the presidents
- Look at photos in a photography book
- Identify states on a U.S. map
- Complete a puzzle
- Read from one of their favorite books
- Watch a favorite movie or sitcom
- Watch a sporting event
- Ask the person about his or her childhood, siblings, school, pets or first car
- Read the newspaper together or read it to them
- Play a card game

Do something personal:

- Give the person a hand massage with lotion
- Brush his or her hair
- Give the person a manicure
- Take photos of the person and make a collage
- Encourage the person to talk more about subjects they enjoy
- Make a family tree posterboard

We hope this list has provided you with some ideas or sparked a new idea! Please share this information with family members or other visitors. For more activity ideas and considerations, visit our [website](#).

The [Alzheimer's Association](#) is a worldwide health organization dedicated to Alzheimer's care, support, and research. Its mission is to lead the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia — by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support. More information is available at [alz.org](#) or the 24/7 Helpline: 800.272.3900.

alzheimer's 
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News, Updates, Tips

NHSN LTCF Quick Links

- [Vaccination Weekly HCP & Resident COVID-19 Module](#)
- **New** [How to Address COVID-19 Module Data Alerts](#)
- [COVID-19 LTCF Module Main Webpage](#) **New** postings under the Archived Training section
- [Frequently Asked Question COVID-19 Data Document](#)
- [NHSN Point of Care Testing Reporting Tool Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [NHSN LTC COVID-19 Module How to Re-Assign the Facility Administrator](#)

NHSN Troubleshooting Quick Tips by GPQIN re: obtaining NHSN access

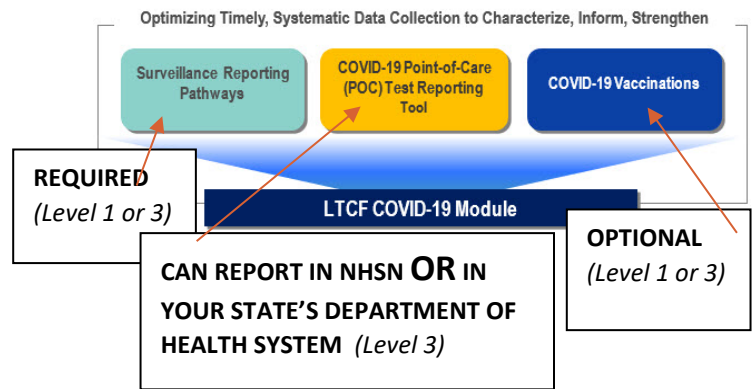
- [ADDING ADDITIONAL USERS TO NHSN / LEVEL 1 SECURITY VS LEVEL 3 SECURITY](#)
- [I HAVE NHSN LEVEL 1 SECURITY. HOW DO I GET LEVEL 3 SECURITY?](#)
- [I HAVEN'T RECEIVED THE SAMS INVITE TO UPLOAD MY IDENTITY DOCUMENTS? WHAT CAN I DO?](#)
- [I HAVEN'T RECEIVED MY SAMS GRID CARD? WHAT CAN I DO?](#)

Have you considered using the NHSN COVID-19 Vaccination Reporting Module?

The **NHSN COVID-19 Healthcare Personal (HCP) & Resident Vaccination Reporting Module** can help facilities *put data into action* and help obtain a picture of COVID-19 vaccination at the facility such as:

- Monitor vaccination trends over time.
Example: Review how quickly cumulative vaccination coverage rates increase each week for residents /HCP groups
- Identify residents and HCP groups with lower vaccination rates
Example: A facility may find that vaccination rates are lower among housekeeping than among nurses
- Improve vaccination tracking
Example: Implement automated tracking systems

Both CMS and the CDC are encouraging long term care facilities to utilize the [Weekly HCP & Resident COVID-19 Vaccinations through NHSN module](#) - the link includes training slides, data collection forms/instructions, [FAQ document](#) and supporting materials, such as handy vaccination data tracking worksheets for residents and healthcare personnel. Comparable to the NHSN Influenza Vaccination Reporting Module, data will not be submitted that identifies individuals, but rather the cumulative number of healthcare personnel and LTCF residents. To report in this module, users need to only have Level 1 clearance. Currently this module is optional; however, there are national conversations that a new vaccination quality measure related to covid vaccination may be approved in the future that certainly could lead this reporting to be mandatory.





“Once you get the initial information in, the reporting should go quick, and you have your data in one place. Right now, I use a desk planner to track our vaccines and indicate resident name or staff name, first or second dose, and manufacturer but I’m very interested in seeing how the excel tracking worksheets could fit in my workflow.”

~ Laura Wilson, Administrator, Tiezen Memorial Home, Marion, SD

In addition, the weekly COVID-19 vaccination modules allow for reporting of COVID-19 vaccine supply and number of clinically significant COVID-19 vaccination adverse events in the last week, with a direct link to the [Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System \(VAERS\)](#) for reporting individual cases of adverse events.

Contact your Great Plains QIN Quality Improvement Advisors, [Lori Hintz- SD](#) and, [Michelle Lauckner - ND](#) to answer questions and provide assistance.



CMS and CDC Updates and Resources

CMS [QSO-20-38-NH: COVID-19 LTC Facility Testing Requirements, Rev Focused Survey Tool](#) – Rev 4/27/2021

CMS [QSO-20-39 NH: Nursing Home Visitation COVID19](#) Rev 4/27/2021

The CDC guidance “Preparing for COVID-19 in Nursing Homes” has been renamed to [Interim Infection Prevention Control Recommendations to Prevent SARS-CoV-2 Spread in NHs – 3/29/2021](#). This includes two prior documents, “Responding to COVID-19 in NH’s” and “Performing Facility-wide SARS-CoV-2 Testing in Nursing Homes” which were merged with this guidance. The guidance has been organized according to infection prevention and control practices that should remain in place regardless of if nursing homes are experiencing outbreaks of SARS-CoV-2. The recommendations supplement the CDC’s [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Pandemic \(2/23/2021\)](#) and are specific for nursing homes, but may also apply to other long-term care and residential settings.

CMS [QSO-21-15-ALL Updated Guidance Emergency Preparedness - Appendix Z of SOM](#) 3/26/2021

CDC [Infection Prevention & Control Assessment \(ICAR\) tool for NH Preparing for COVID-19](#) - 3/16/2021

CDC [Healthcare Infection Prevention & Control Recomm \(Visitation, Quarantine, Testing, PPE\)](#) – 3/10/2021

CMS [COVID-19 Partner Toolkit](#) - updated frequently

CMS [QSO-20-31-All: Revised COVID-19 Survey Activities, Enhanced Enforcement for Infection Control deficiencies & QI Activities in Nursing Homes](#) -1/4/2021

CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Resources

[CDC COVID-19 Vaccine Webinar Series](#) – 3/24/2021

[Long-Term Care Facility Toolkit: Preparing for COVID-19 Vaccination at your Facility](#)

[FAQs about COVID-19 Vaccination in LTCFs](#) – **Good information here**

Does Your Workforce Need Infection Control Training? COVID Won't be the Last Threat.

WE ARE **PROJECT FIRSTLINE**



Healthcare and frontline workers – *from acute care to long-term care* - are our nation's first line of defense against infectious disease. [Project Firstline](#) is the latest **Centers for Disease Control (CDC)** training on Infection Prevention & Control. This **FREE** training is comprised of **short videos** that fit into busy schedules. It is powerful knowledge that **workers need** to protect themselves and their community.

The first step is to complete a **Learning Needs Assessment Survey** to help create the most relevant training possible for your individual facility. The CDC asks each facility to **COMPLETE and SHARE this brief 10-minute survey (links for SD & ND listed separately below) with your staff** so they can gather insights from a variety of workers in the healthcare and related services (nurses, CNAs, PT, EVS, dietary, etc.) field. The goal is to provide workers with the most relevant infection control trainings possible.

NORTH DAKOTA Survey / Assessment Link

[North Dakota Project Firstline Learning Needs Assessment | Qualtrics Survey Solutions](#)

Brought to you by the Centers for Disease Control and the North Dakota Department of Health

SOUTH DAKOTA Survey / Assessment Link

[South Dakota Project Firstline Learning Needs Survey](#)
OR you can scan the QR code below to take the survey

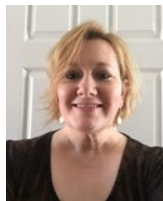


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