



Weekly Roundup

...Reporting the state and national long-term care news

Please disseminate relevant information to the appropriate department.

- Administration Nursing Dietary Activities Social Services
 Rehabilitation Housekeeping Maintenance Laundry

Friday, July 10, 2020

The Alabama Nursing Home Association has a webpage dedicated to COVID-19 which is updated throughout the week. Go to anha.org/covid19. Information is arranged by category.

STATE NEWS

Economic Impact Payments (Stimulus Checks) FAQs

The ANHA worked with the Alabama Medicaid Agency, the State Ombudsman and the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit of the Alabama Attorney General's Office to answer frequently asked questions regarding the Economic Impact Payments (EIPs) or stimulus funds residents have received. In addition, the ANHA developed a form that facilities can use to document the use of EIP funds. *The FAQs and form are attached.*

Need Nurses and Staff? The ANHA Job Board can help

The Alabama Board of Nursing (ABON) recently sent an email with a link to the ANHA's Job Board to all licensed nurses in the state. The email invited nurses to apply for jobs in nursing homes to help us secure the staff we need while fighting COVID-19 and for the future. If you have staffing needs, it is important you list them on the ANHA Job Board.

If you have used the ANHA Job Board before, [click here](#)

- Sign-in to your account - if you have forgotten your password, please click on the Forgot Password prompt
- Click Post A Job and begin entering job description
- After the job posting is approved, you will get a confirmation email stating the listing is active on the ANHA Job Board

If you have not used the ANHA Job Board before, [click here](#)

- Fill out and submit the information for your profile
- Watch for an email from the ANHA approving your account
- Follow the link within the email to post a job
- After your job posting is approved, you will receive a confirmation email stating the listing is active on the ANHA Job Board

As a reminder, **reference to compensation is not allowed in your postings**. If you have questions, please contact Christy deGraffenried at christy@anha.org.

Voting Procedures for the 2020 Primary Run-off Election

Alabama's 2020 Primary Run-off Election will be held Tuesday, July 14.

- The close of business Monday, July 13 is the deadline to return an absentee ballot to the Absentee Election Manager
 - Monday, July 13 is the last day to postmark an absentee ballot

Attached is a memo from ANHA's legal counsel outlining elections laws and how they affect your residents, family members and employees. Also attached is a copy of the Alabama Secretary of State's 2020 Voter Guide.

Please contact Christy deGraffenried at the ANHA office at (334) 271-6214 or christy@anha.org if you have any questions.

Alabama Counts: 2020 Census Update

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) is coordinating the state's response to the 2020 U.S. Census. ADECA wants to know the status of nursing homes' census enumeration. Please email ICount@census.alabama.gov and let ADECA know if your facility has already submitted its census forms or if your facility needs additional support.

Update Your ANHA Membership Info

The ANHA is asking its members to electronically their facility's information for the 2020-2021 Directory. Click [here](#) to update your data. Please contact Kerri Parker at kparker@anha.org if you have questions. Thank you for your assistance.

Alabama LTC COVID-19 Office Hours

The Alabama Nursing Home Association, Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and Alliant Health are committed to provide additional infection prevention and control support to nursing homes across the state.

ADPH in collaboration with the Alabama Nursing Home Association, and Alabama's Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) Alliant Health, wish to set up COVID-19 Office Hours for any facilities available to join for a 30-minute open discussion on **Thursdays ONLY from 11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.** This will be an opportunity to ask questions and share ideas on best practices. Those joining can either email their questions to Katrina Magdon at kmagdon@anha.org and she will then ask during the call or you can type your question directly into the chat.

To join the WebEx:

When it's time, join your Webex meeting click here: [Join meeting](#)

Meeting number (access code): 129 130 9666

Join by phone

Tap to call in from a mobile device (attendees only) [+1-415-655-0003](tel:+14156550003) United States Toll

Join from a video system or application

Dial [1291309666@allianthealthgroup.webex.com](tel:1291309666)

You can also dial 173.243.2.68 and enter your meeting number.

Also, feel free to just speak up! At the end of the month, we will host a HAI Huddle webinar which will address and provide guidance on some of the common themes that were brought up on the office hour calls. We are looking forward to this collaboration and hope to hear from you all soon.

AIMS Nursing Home Supply Request Reporting Form

There is a new process for nursing homes to request PPE and supplies. The following information is provided regarding the new process:

Process for Nursing Homes to request PPE/supplies:

- Nursing Home AIMS users will have access to a new report form to request PPE and other supplies as needed, via the “Nursing Home Supply Request” reporting form.
- The AIMS Supply Request form should be completed when a facility has a need that cannot be filled through their normal supply chains.
- Requests will be filled by ADPH as the supplies are available. There is no guarantee the resources requested will be available or filled.
- Nursing homes who do not have an AIMS account may contact their District AIMS Coordinator ([click here for a map and contact info](#)) to request an account; if the NH is not a member of the District HCC, they may request membership information.

How to Access the AIMS Nursing Home Supply Request reporting form:

- Login into AIMS (al.aimslive.org)
- Click on the Status tab
- Click on the Reporting Forms, the page defaults to the Supply Request form

How to Complete the AIMS Nursing Home Supply Request reporting form:

- Complete form as supplies are needed
- Complete each field on the survey
- Select the SAVE button
- Requests will be filled by ADPH as supplies are available
- A record of all Form Submissions is viewable to the facility at the bottom of the report form
- Nursing Homes who complete the Supply Request, do not need to create a message and notification in AIMS, simply submit the form
- In the event of an urgent, critical need, a Nursing Home should contact their Healthcare Coalition for assistance.
- When possible, ADPH will notify the HCC Coordinators/EP Directors when supplies are being shipped to their District Nursing Homes.

If you have any questions or need assistance with AIMS, please contact your [HCC AIMS Coordinator](#) and/or the University of South Alabama’s [Center for Domestic Health Preparedness](#).

ADPH Reminder on Reporting COVID-19 Cases

The Alabama Department of Public Health reminds everyone that facilities are responsible for reporting suspected COVID-19 to their local Health Department. If a facility is suspicious enough to test, it needs to report. The ADPH Bureau of Health Provider Standards would also

appreciate a courtesy notification as well to Mia Sadler, mia.sadler@adph.state.al.us, and Lisa Pezent, lisa.pezent@adph.state.al.us.

Please Notify ANHA of COVID-19 Cases

Please notify the Alabama Nursing Home Association if your facility has a resident or staff member diagnosed with COVID-19. Email Katrina Magdon, kmagdon@anha.org, and John Matson, jmatson@anha.org. Thank you for your assistance. Also, you may refer media questions to John, and contact Katrina with your regulatory questions.

More UPDATES Related to COVID-19

Serious Adverse Health Events Associated with Methanol-based Hand Sanitizers

Most commercially available alcohol-based hand sanitizers or rubs (ABHSR) contain either ethanol or isopropanol as active ingredients. On June 19, 2020, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) advised consumers not to use any hand sanitizer manufactured by “Eskbiochem SA de CV” in Mexico, due to the potential presence of **methanol**, a “toxic alcohol”, as an active ingredient, which can cause blindness and/or death when absorbed through the skin or when swallowed. Since then, FDA has identified additional ABHSR products that contain methanol and is working with manufacturers and distributors on a voluntary recall of these products (<https://www.fda.gov/drugs/drug-safety-and-availability/fda-updates-hand-sanitizers-methanol>).

SHPDA Annual Reports – Due August 17

The State Health Planning and Development Agency (SHPDA) recently sent information related to the 2020 Annual Report to all providers. The annual reports are due by August 17, with the 60-day grace period expiring approximately October 16. ANHA encourages you to complete this report in a timely fashion. Penalties are issued when the report is not submitted within the time frames as outlined in the letter you received from SHPDA.

Clarification on Gateway to Community Living Referrals:

In accordance with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requirements, every nursing facility resident that expresses an interest in community living needs to have an opportunity to discuss their options. This is determined through the MDS assessment.

Some important reminders are:

- Gateway to Community Living (GCL) should receive all referrals regardless of an individual’s situation. (Court Order, Dementia DX, Total Care, etc.)
- Referrals for home health services do not meet this requirement.
- The GCL program will decide who can safely be served in the community based on current federally approved eligibility criteria.
- Referrals for GCL are made and managed through the Gateway to Community Living Portal: <https://gclportal.medicaid.alabama.gov/>.
- GCL can also accept referrals from individuals living in nursing homes, or their family members or advocates, on-line or by fax, mail or email. gclportal@medicaid.alabama.gov.
- For additional information, brochures, or help with account setup with the GCL portal please contact Ann Duncan at 334-353-3273 or 855-236-6341.

Nurse Aide Abuse Registry

Please note that the following individuals have been placed on the Alabama Nurse Aide Abuse and/or Sanction Registry. These individuals are prohibited from working in any long-term care facility. To check nurse aides, you can use the nurse aide web site at www.adph.org (Click on Contents A-Z - located in the dark blue at the top of the screen - then Click on Nurse Aide Registry - then Click in the white box and type in the Social Security Number of the person you are trying to find. Be sure and include the dashes in the SSN.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Lynda Mock	07/08/2020

NATIONAL NEWS

CMS Updates ABN Form for Medicare Services

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently updated the Advance Beneficiary Notice of Noncoverage (ABN), [Form CMS-R-131](#), which is issued by SNF and other providers submitting claims for Medicare items and services to beneficiaries in situations where Medicare payment is expected to be denied. The ABN is issued in order to transfer potential financial liability to the Medicare beneficiary in certain instances. Guidelines for issuing the ABN can be found beginning in Section 50 in the Medicare Claims Processing Manual, 100-4, [Chapter 30](#). SNFs issue the ABN to transfer potential financial liability for items/services expected to be denied under Medicare Part B only. The updated ABN, Form CMS-R-131, and form instructions have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for renewal. The use of the renewed form with the expiration date of 06/30/2023 will be mandatory on 8/31/2020. The ABN form and instructions may be found [here](#).

CMS Announces Plans to End the Blanket Waiver Requiring Nursing Homes to Submit Staffing Data

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has announced plans to end the emergency blanket waiver requiring all nursing homes to resume submitting staffing data through the Payroll-Based Journal (PBJ) system by August 14, 2020. The PBJ system allows CMS to collect nursing home staffing information. The blanket waiver was intended to temporarily allow the agency to concentrate efforts on combating COVID-19 and reduce administrative burden on nursing homes so they could focus on patient health and safety during this public health emergency.

The memorandum released June 25 also provides updates related to staffing and quality measures used on the Nursing Home Compare website and the Five Star Rating System.

To view the memorandum to states and nursing home stakeholders, visit:

<https://www.cms.gov/medicareprovider-enrollment-and-certificationsurvey/certificationgeninfopolicy-and-memos-states-and/changes-staffing-information-and-quality-measures-posted-nursing-home-compare-website-and-five-star>.

Outlook for Three-Day Hospital Waiver

In the past months, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has issued an array of national, “blanket” waivers to reduce administrative burden, improve access to care, and expedite provider payment in both the Medicare and Medicaid programs. Important Medicare SNF waivers include waive of the 3-Day Stay Rule and Spell of Illness while an important Medicaid waiver is the elimination recertification requirements. These waivers, included under a national, blanket waiver called a Section 1135 waiver, remain in place while a Public Health Emergency (PHE) is in force.

Under the President’s March declaration of a [PHE under Section 319 of the Public Health Service Act](#), the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has the authority to declare a [PHE exists](#) in 90-day increments. Effective April 26, HHS Secretary Azar announced a [PHE 90 day extension](#) through July 26. In late July, Secretary Azar has two options:

1. Allow the PHE and the Section 1135 to expire; or
2. Allow the PHE to expire but extend the Section 1135.

The Secretary has the authority to extend the Section 1135 in 60-day increments. As an example, Secretary Azar could allow the PHE to expire on July 26 but extend the Section 1135 waiver until September 26 and then, again, until November 26.

Outlook for Other Important Resources

In addition to the waivers, important resources are increased federal Medicaid funding for states with a 6.2 percentage point increase and the CARES Act Provider Relief Fund. [Increased federal Medicaid funding to the states](#) is tied to the PHE. The increased federal dollars are available for qualifying expenditures that were incurred on or after January 1, 2020, and through the end of the quarter in which the public health emergency including any extensions, ends. Following the example above, if the Secretary allows the PHE to end on July 26, the increased federal matching percentage would end on September 30.

The CARES Act Provider Relief Fund is not tied to any date in the CARES Act statutory language nor the PHE. The Fund is entirely at the discretion of the Secretary.

OTHER NEWS

CMS and QIO Nursing Home Training Series Webcast

July 16, 3:00-4:00 p.m. CT

Register for this webcast at

https://conference.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1332690&tp_key=4804939c98.

The series is brought to you by CMS and the Quality Improvement Organization Program, a national network of Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement Organizations serving every state and territory. Upcoming topic:

- July 16: Reopening Considerations

Miss a training? View recordings, slides, and resources at <https://qioprogram.org/nursing-home-trainings>.

CDC Launches Webinar Series

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has launched a Long-Term Care Frontline Staff Training Webinar Series for staff who care for vulnerable residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities. These five short webinars review basic infection prevention steps essential for preventing the spread of COVID-19. *See the attached flyer for more details.*

AHCA/NCAL Announces October Dates for Virtual Convention

Join your long term and post-acute care colleagues from across the country for the first-ever virtual AHCA/NCAL Convention & Expo, October 8-31, 2020.

The past few months have presented tremendous challenges to the long-term and post-acute care sector, and yet we have pressed on. We are working through a period in time that is at once enormously difficult and filled with opportunity for growth.

The [71st AHCA/NCAL Convention & Expo](#) will meet these tough times head on, taking a complete look at what has happened over the past year, some of the lessons learned, where there is room to improve and how, and what we can work towards in the future. The event promises to be memorable and meaningful.

This year's convention offers you 24 days of on-demand content. And you can connect in real time with Get-Together Thursdays—three days of live-stream sessions on October 8, 15, and 22.

You'll still get all the things you love about convention:

- Inspiring speakers
- Education sessions covering a wide range of topics
- Opportunities to earn CEs and NABs – more than ever before!
- Networking and exchanging of ideas
- Quality Awards and recognition

There's even an Expo Hall. See the latest business solutions and talk to company representatives in real time. AHCA/NCAL's industry partners remain committed to you and your needs and stand ready to provide you with answers. Registration opens in early July. Visit AHCAConvention.org.

AHCA Launches New Functional Outcomes Improvement Online Training

The American Health Care Association (AHCA) has launched a new online course titled [Functional Outcomes Improvement](#) that provides specialized on-line training offered through [ahcancaLED](#) for all staff who have a role in improving patient functional outcomes quality and services.

The Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC), the [IMPACT Act](#), and CMS called for the development of functional improvement measures based on the self-care and mobility sections of the [Continuity Assessment Record and Evaluation \(CARE\)](#) tool.

Course Content & Target Audience

This course advances knowledge and skills about functional improvement through an array of learning tools and resources designed to meet the educational needs of various staff and departments. This includes learning about daily care best practices and real-world tools that improve functional outcomes. Nurses, CNAs, therapists, activities staff and others responsible for improving functional outcomes will learn from this course.

The program is flexible and can be completed in one sitting or one module at a time. The training is delivered in five modules, including:

- **Module 1** – Explores the connection between functional outcomes and person-centered care, and how utilization of evidence-based pragmatic programs leads toward continuous improvement.
- **Module 2** – Reviews the regulations related to functional outcomes including the CMS Requirements of Participation and how functional improvement impacts reimbursement.
- **Module 3** – Covers best care coordination practices for short- and long-stay patients, including coordinating with therapy processes, and provides an overview of effective restorative nursing programs.
- **Module 4** – Closely examines care practice application and what individuals can do to increase function, team engagement and concludes with a discussion of various quality initiatives that lead to better outcomes.
- **Module 5** – Reviews the tools and resources needed to further functional outcomes improvement approaches to person-centered care.

Course Fees and CEs

The cost for the training program is \$199 for AHCA/NCAL members and \$650 for non-members and offers 6.5 NAB CE credits for administrators and 6.5 contact hours for nurses through the Iowa Board of Nursing. There is a quiz at the end of four of the five modules, and participants must pass a final exam with a score of 80 or higher to receive credit. To register, go to [Functional Outcomes Improvement](#) or ahcancal.org/functionaloutcomes.

Launch of Updated & Expanded Version of AHCA's Infection Preventionist Training (IPCO)

The American Health Care Association (AHCA) has released a new and expanded version of its popular [Infection Preventionist Specialized Training](#) (IPCO Version 2) that was first launched in 2017. The program is available to members and non-members.

Phase III Requirements of Participation took effect November 28, 2019 and mandate that every nursing facility have a designated and specially trained Infection Preventionist who is running a comprehensive infection prevention and control program. AHCA recommends that each skilled nursing facility train at least two Infection Preventionists through [AHCA's IPCO training program](#) should one Infection Preventionist leave the facility. The training is also highly recommended for assisted living communities because they care for a similar population and face similar infection risks.

IPCO Version 2 is designed to train Infection Preventionists and is approved for 25 ANCC contact hours. The online course is also now approved for 22 NAB CEUs for Administrators. AHCA recognizes Administrators will not serve as designated Infection

Preventionists, but we recommend that Administrators consider taking the course to gain a deeper understanding of infection prevention and control in the overall operation of a nursing facility as this is a high target area for survey and liability.

A quick reminder that while CDC/CMS did release a free infection prevention training course in March 2019, AHCA's IPCO Version 2 training is far more comprehensive and includes updated information. AHCA's course also includes in-depth learning on topics such as water management, antibiotic stewardship and bonus content on key issues surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic.

Alabama Nursing Home Association

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Links:

Alabama Nursing Home Association <http://www.anha.org>

AL Board of Examiners of Nursing Home Administrators <http://www.alboenha.alabama.gov>

AL Dept. of Public Health <http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov>

CMS <http://cms.gov>