



CMS issues nursing homes best practices toolkit to combat COVID-19

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On May 14, 2020, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released a new [toolkit](#) that provides innovative solutions and a wide range of guidance to states, health care providers and others to protect nursing homes and their residents during the COVID-19 public health emergency. The toolkit, which builds upon previous actions taken by CMS, is comprised of best practices from a variety of front line health care providers, governors' COVID-19 task forces, associations and other organizations, and experts and includes a useful collection of resources to address the unique challenges nursing homes are facing during the COVID-19 emergency.

The toolkit provides detailed resources and direction for quality improvement assistance and can help in the creation and implementation of strategies and interventions intended to manage and prevent the spread of COVID-19 within nursing homes. It also outlines best practices for a variety of subjects ranging from infection control to workforce and staffing and provides contact information for organizations that can assist with the unique challenges posed by caring for individuals in long-term care settings. All 50 states were involved in developing the toolkit, resulting in a comprehensive resource.

In addition, CMS has contracted with 12 Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement Organizations (QIN-QIOs) to work with providers, community partners, beneficiaries and caregivers on data-driven quality improvement initiatives designed to improve the quality of care for beneficiaries across the U.S. The QIN-QIOs are contacting nursing homes across the country to provide virtual technical assistance that can potentially make improvements based on an analysis of previous citations for infection control deficiencies using publicly available data found on Nursing Home Compare. The toolkit supplements CMS' prior efforts to ensure safety and quality in nursing homes, including announcing a five-part plan and reissuing infection control guidelines,

guidance on new screening processes for facilities, use of personal protective equipment and others.

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