

COVID-19 Action Plan for Congregate Care Settings

A TOOL TO IDENTIFY WHO IN THE FACILITY WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR TAKING CERTAIN COVID-19-SPECIFIC ACTIONS

Facility leadership should direct and oversee the COVID-19 Action Plan and ensure updates are incorporated in a timely manner (e.g., quarterly).

When used in this document, the term “staff” refers to those providing direct care to residents or services within the facility, which may include employees, consultants, contractors, and volunteers.

1. Administrative

Action	Person Responsible	Due Date	Date Complete	Comments
<p>Ensure infection preventionist has adequate time, training, and resources. Additional tasks during the pandemic may include surveillance, staff education, conducting audits, and consulting with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and reporting to NHSN (if applicable).</p> <p>CDC recommends a full-time role for at least one person in facilities that have more than 100 residents or that provide on-site ventilator or hemodialysis services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CDC: Infection Prevention Training LTCF (www.cdc.gov/longtermcare/training.html) ▪ CDC TRAIN: Free Nursing Home Infection Preventionist Training Course (www.train.org/cdctrain/training_plan/3814) ▪ CDC: Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the COVID-19 Pandemic (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html) ▪ Long-term Care: COVID-19 (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/ltc.html) 				
<p>Develop an emergency preparedness plan to identify activation of Incident Command System (ICS). ICS is a standardized approach to the command, control, and coordination of emergency response (planning, operations, logistics, finance).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Long-Term Care (LTC) Emergency Preparedness (www.health.state.mn.us/communities/ep/ltc/index.html) 				

COVID-19 ACTION PLAN FOR CONGREGATE CARE SETTINGS

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<p>Review current CMS, CDC, and MDH guidance on conducting internal and external resident activities and communal dining. Components of review should include social distancing, wearing masks, and hand hygiene.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CDC: Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations to Prevent SARS-CoV-2 Spread in Nursing Homes (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html) ▪ Long-term Care: COVID-19 (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/ltc.html) 				
<p>Implement infection prevention and control measures for visitors per CDC and CMS guidance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CMS QSO-20-39-NH Nursing Home Visitation – COVID-19 (Revised) (www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-39-nh-revised.pdf) 				
<p>Develop plans for a surge in numbers of COVID-19-positive residents (e.g., plan for 10, 20, 30, or more cases). Plans should include establishment and implementation of a COVID-19 unit per facility regulations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MDH COVID-19 Surge Planning Checklist for Long-term Care Facilities (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/ltsurgecheck.docx) ▪ MDH Principles for COVID-19 Cohorting in Long-term Care (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/ltcipchohort.pdf) 				
<p>Develop a quarantine procedure based on current guidelines for residents who were exposed to COVID-19.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CDC: Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations to Prevent SARS-CoV-2 Spread in Nursing Homes (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html) 				
<p>Maintain vaccine-preventable strategies. Ensure influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations continue. Work with local public health and pharmacy to provide COVID-19 vaccine for residents and staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MDH About COVID-19 Vaccine (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/vaccine/basics.html) ▪ MDH Influenza Vaccine Information For Health Professionals (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/flu/hcp/vaccine/index.html) 				

COVID-19 ACTION PLAN FOR CONGREGATE CARE SETTINGS

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDH Pneumococcal Information for Health Professionals (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/pneumococcal/hcp.html) 				

2. Surveillance

Action	Person Responsible	Due Date	Date Complete	Comments
<p>Establish screening procedures per CDC and CMS guidance. Record keeping should follow current industry guidance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CDC: Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations to Prevent SARS-CoV-2 Spread in Nursing Homes (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html) 				
<p>Implement screening and monitoring of residents upon admission and at least daily for fever (>100.0°F), and symptoms of COVID-19. Ideally, include an assessment of oxygen saturation via pulse oximetry. If positive for fever or symptoms, implement transmission-based precautions as described below in Section 5. Older adults with COVID-19 may not show typical symptoms. Use a line list to capture key information about each case, with each row representing a case and each column representing a variable (e.g., demographic, clinical and epidemiologic information). Maintain a very low threshold for testing of residents. During a facility outbreak, consider screening residents every shift.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CDC: Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations to Prevent SARS-CoV-2 Spread in Nursing Homes (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html) 				
<p>Implement screening of staff when reporting to duty. Fever can be either measured temperature ≥100.0°F or subjective fever. Refer to link below for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Staff should be excluded from work if ill. Use line list to capture key information about each case, with each row representing a case and each column representing a variable (e.g., demographic, clinical and epidemiologic information). Maintain a very low threshold for testing of staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CDC: Symptoms of COVID-19 (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html) 				

COVID-19 ACTION PLAN FOR CONGREGATE CARE SETTINGS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CDC: Interim Guidance for Managing Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection or Exposure to SARS-CoV-2 (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assessment-hcp.html) 				
<p>Develop a return-to-work policy for staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 (they should be at home for at least 10 days including 24 hours with no fever and improvement of symptoms) or quarantined due to exposure to a COVID-19 case as notified by public health. Develop a policy for testing staff who develop symptoms of COVID-19 and a return-to-work policy for all ill staff including those who test negative for COVID-19 and for whom no alternative diagnosis is established.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CDC: Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations to Prevent SARS-CoV-2 Spread in Nursing Homes (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html) ▪ CDC: Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the COVID-19 Pandemic (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html) ▪ CDC: Interim Guidance for Managing Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection or Exposure to SARS-CoV-2 (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assessment-hcp.html) 				
<p>Develop a plan for testing residents and staff for SARS-CoV-2, based on CMS and MDH guidance, to include: testing of symptomatic residents and staff (anyone with even mild symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status, should be tested); outbreak testing (plan should establish a relationship with a lab to facilitate prompt testing); expanded screening testing (e.g., when not in an outbreak); contact tracing procedures (to respond to know positive cases in any staff or a nursing home-onset case in any resident).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MDH Long-term Care Testing: COVID-19 (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/lctesting.html) ▪ CDC COVID Data Tracker (https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view) 				
<p>Report to MDH within one working day any positive COVID-19 cases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MDH Reporting Results of COVID-19 Tests Performed Inside Your Long-term Care Facility (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/lcantigenreport.pdf) 				

3. Education

Action	Person Responsible	Due Date	Date Complete	Comments
<p>Provide education on COVID-19 basics for staff, including their role in prevention and containment. (e.g., transmission, signs, symptoms, general infection control practices). Reinforce education to maintain competencies (e.g., new hires, new products, audit results, outbreak, guidance updates).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Firstline training materials to build foundational knowledge of infection control. CDC: Project Firstline (www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/projectfirstline/index.html) Search COVID-19 trainings, learn COVID-19 basics, and review the latest science. CDC: Training for Healthcare Professionals (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/training.html) Learn fundamentals of COVID-19 prevention for nursing home management. CMS-CDC COVID-19 Training (qioprogram.org/cms-cdc-covid-19-training) 				
<p>Provide education to residents, visitors, and families regarding COVID-19 response and updates. Notify residents and representatives of COVID-19 cases as outlined by CMS: QSO-20-26-NH (www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-26-nh.pdf).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CDC: Nursing Homes and Long-Term Care Facilities (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/nursing-home-long-term-care.html) 				

4. Hand hygiene

Action	Person Responsible	Due Date	Date Complete	Comments
<p>Ensure alcohol-based hand rub dispensers are available and full in all common areas and in each resident room (ideally both inside and outside of the room) and other care locations. Choose hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol. Monitor supply of alcohol-based hand rub.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CDC: Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations to Prevent SARS-CoV-2 Spread in Nursing Homes (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html) 				
<p>Conduct routine hand hygiene audits to assure staff are performing hand hygiene when required. Audit multiple shifts and all staff. Calculate compliance rates and address identified gaps. Share audit results with staff.</p>				

COVID-19 ACTION PLAN FOR CONGREGATE CARE SETTINGS

Action	Person Responsible	Due Date	Date Complete	Comments
<p>Provide education to staff (competency-based), residents, and visitors on effective hand hygiene practices and reinforce routinely.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDH Hand Hygiene Print Materials (www.health.state.mn.us/people/handhygiene/materials.html) CDC video: COVID-19 Prevention Messages for Front Line Long-Term Care Staff: Clean Hands – Combat COVID-19 (www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmYMULy7qiE) CDC: Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the COVID-19 Pandemic (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html) 				

5. Transmission-based precautions

Action	Person Responsible	Due Date	Date Complete	Comments
<p>Educate staff on when to put residents into transmission-based precautions (e.g., contact plus droplet/enhanced respiratory precautions).</p> <p>Isolation separates sick people with a contagious disease, like COVID-19, from people who are not sick.</p> <p>Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to or may have been exposed to a contagious disease, like COVID-19, in case they become sick.</p> <p>Provide ongoing re-enforcement of transmission-based precaution education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDH Principles for COVID-19 Cohorting in Long-term Care (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/lcipcchohort.pdf) CDC: Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the COVID-19 Pandemic (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html) CDC: Quarantine and Isolation (www.cdc.gov/quarantine/index.html) 				
<p>Audit staff compliance with TBP and share results with staff.</p> <p>Audit multiple shifts and all staff.</p> <p>Calculate compliance rates and address identified gaps.</p>				

COVID-19 ACTION PLAN FOR CONGREGATE CARE SETTINGS

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<p>Have signs readily available that can be posted near the entryway of affected resident room(s). Educate on proper posting of signage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDH Enhanced Respiratory Precautions (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/ppepresign.pdf) CDC: Three Key Factors Required for a Respirator to be Effective Infographic (www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/pdfs/KeyFactorsRequiredResp01042018-508.pdf) 				

6. Personal protective equipment (PPE)

Action	Person Responsible	Due Date	Date Complete	Comments
<p>Provide competency-based education on PPE donning and doffing for all staff including: what to wear and when (gowns, respirator, face mask, eye protection, gloves), standard precautions, source control, and for residents in transmission-based precautions. Have references on PPE donning and doffing readily available, posted in multiple locations, and at point of care (POC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face masks and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/guidance.html#ppe) CDC: Protecting Healthcare Personnel (www.cdc.gov/hai/prevent/ppe.html) CDC: Sequence for Putting On PPE (www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/pdfs/PPE-Sequence-508.pdf) CDC: Infection Control Guidance for Healthcare Professionals about Coronavirus (COVID-19) (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control.html) CDC Optimizing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Supplies (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/index.html) CDC: COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (www.cdc.gov/niosh/emres/2019_ncov_ppe.html) 				
<p>Audit staff compliance over multiple shifts with PPE use (e.g., donning and doffing), and share results with staff.</p> <p>Calculate compliance rates and address identified gaps.</p>				

COVID-19 ACTION PLAN FOR CONGREGATE CARE SETTINGS

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<p>Ensure adequate PPE supplies are available. Ensure there is a process for tracking the amount of PPE supplies on hand and update as needed.</p> <p>Using the CDC: PPE Burn Rate Calculator (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/burn-calculator.html) is a way to monitor and predict PPE needs.</p> <p>If you will experience a shortage of PPE (3-7 days left of supply), follow these steps in order and escalate to the next measure, if needed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with usual vendor to secure supply. 2. Escalate to regional health care coalition contact (visit Regional Health Care Preparedness Coordinators (www.health.state.mn.us/communities/ep/coalitions/rhpc.html)). 3. Escalate to the state cache via REDCap. Be prepared to describe efforts to secure PPE via other routes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MDH COVID-19 SupplyChain Resource Requests (AKA PPE REDCap Survey) (redcap.health.state.mn.us/redcap/surveys/?s=LXR9JMRYEJ) 				

7. Environmental cleaning

Action	Person Responsible	Due Date	Date Complete	Comments
<p>Ensure disinfectant is EPA approved and effective against SARS-CoV-2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EPA About List N: Disinfectants for Coronavirus (COVID-19) (www.epa.gov/coronavirus/about-list-n-disinfectants-coronavirus-covid-19-0) 				
<p>Provide, reinforce, and document staff education on cleaning products, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ready-to-use or to-be-prepared (diluted/mixed) product. ▪ Effectiveness against SARS-CoV-2 virus. ▪ Contact (wet) time. ▪ Frequency of cleaning/disinfecting. ▪ CDC video: LTC Mini Webinar: Sparkling Surfaces: Stop COVID-19's Spread (www.youtube.com/watch?v=t7OH8ORr5Ig) ▪ CDC Video Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility: LTC Mini Webinar: Sparkling Surfaces: Stop COVID-19's Spread (www.youtube.com/watch?v=t7OH8ORr5Ig) 				

COVID-19 ACTION PLAN FOR CONGREGATE CARE SETTINGS

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Ensure environmental services staff (or other designated staff) thoroughly clean and disinfect common areas and high touch surfaces frequently. Increase cleaning and disinfection in isolation rooms to two times a day focusing on the high touch points.				
Position a trash can near the exit of the resident room to make it easy for staff to discard PPE and before providing care for another resident in the same room.				
Keep clean and soiled items separate.				
Audit compliance with cleaning and disinfection of resident rooms, common areas, clean and soiled utility rooms. Share results with staff. Calculate compliance rates and address identified gaps.				

8. Cleaning equipment

Action	Person Responsible	Due Date	Date Complete	Comments
Reinforce staff education on equipment cleaning: every piece of equipment that is shared between residents should be cleaned and disinfected after each use. Determine who cleans which piece of equipment: when, how, and with what product. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EPA About List N: Disinfectants for Coronavirus (COVID-19) www.epa.gov/coronavirus/about-list-n-disinfectants-coronavirus-covid-19-0 				
Ensure disinfectant product(s) is easily accessible at point of care (i.e., in basket attached to equipment) if possible.				
Dedicate equipment to individual residents, when possible, especially items that are difficult to disinfect such as gait belts and lift slings. Dedicate equipment for use with residents known to have COVID-19.				

9. Inter-facility communication and transfers

Action	Person Responsible	Due Date	Date Complete	Comments
Ensure clear and consistent communication with transporter and the receiving facility when transferring a resident with known, suspect, or unknown COVID-19 status to a hospital, outpatient facility or clinic, or other congregate care setting.				

COVID-19 ACTION PLAN FOR CONGREGATE CARE SETTINGS

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<p>Facilities should be prepared to follow the requirements of a receiving facility (e.g., dialysis, preprocedural) such as paperwork, screening, and infection control measures. Plan should include how to ensure medically necessary care (e.g., dialysis, infusion care) for residents with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDH Interim Guidance for Discharge to Home or New/Re-Admission to Congregate Living Settings and Discontinuing Transmission-Based Precautions (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/hospdischarge.pdf) 				

10. Other resources

Action	Person Responsible	Due Date	Date Complete	Comments
<p>COVID-19 Print Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDH Materials and Resources for COVID-19 Response (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/materials/index.html) CDC: COVID-19 Print Resources (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/print-resources.html) CDC: What's New and Updated (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/whats-new-all.html) 				

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