



California Department of Public Health  
Center for Health Care Quality  
AFC Skilled Nursing Facilities Infection Prevention Call  
May 12 & 13, 2021

Recordings, notes and slides for the Wednesday Webinars and Thursday calls can be accessed at the Health Services Advisory Group (HSAG) registration website <https://www.hsag.com/cdph-ip-webinars>

**CDPH Weekly Call-in Information:**

Tuesday 8:00am All Facilities Calls: 844.721.7239; Access code: 7993227

Wednesday 3:00pm SNF Infection Prevention Webinars: Register at: <https://www.hsag.com/cdph-ip-webinars>

Thursday 12:00pm SNF Infection Prevention Calls: 877.226.8163; Access code: 513711

Thank you to California nurses and skilled nursing facility staff and leadership!

*May 6-12, 2021 National Nurse's Week*

*May 9-15, 2021 National Skilled Nursing Care Week*

*May 12, 2021 California Skilled Nursing Recognition Day [Governor Newsom Press Release](#)*

**The presentation covered the following updates:**

- **Follow California guidance in CDPH AFL 20-53.3 and AFL 20-22.7 until further notice.**
  - CDPH AFL 20-53.3 will be updated soon regarding testing fully vaccinated HCP in response to the revised CMS QSO-20-38-NH released on April 27, 2021.
  - CDPH AFL 20-22.7 will be updated soon regarding masking and social distancing requirements during visitation, dining, and group activities in response to the revised CMS QSO-20-39-NH released on April 27, 2021.

Memo	Website Link
CMS QSO-20-38-NH	<a href="https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-38-nh-revised.pdf">https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-38-nh-revised.pdf</a>
CMS QSO-20-39-NH	<a href="https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-39-nh-revised.pdf">https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-39-nh-revised.pdf</a>
CDC Guidance	<a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-after-vaccination.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-after-vaccination.html</a>
CDPH AFL 20-22.7 (updates pending)	<a href="https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/Pages/AFL-20-22.aspx">https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/Pages/AFL-20-22.aspx</a>
CDPH AFL 20-53.3 (updates pending)	<a href="https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/Pages/AFL-20-53.aspx">https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/Pages/AFL-20-53.aspx</a>

- **CDPH SNF Infection Preventionist (IP) 14-Hour Free Online Course**
  - Register: [cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/Pages/IP\\_TrainingForSNFs\\_OnlineCourse.aspx](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/Pages/IP_TrainingForSNFs_OnlineCourse.aspx)
- **NHSN COVID-19 Vaccination Reporting Update**
  - CMS QSO-21-19-NH released May 11<sup>th</sup> <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-21-19-nh.pdf>
  - Interim Final Rule: COVID-19 Vaccine Requirements <https://www.federalregister.gov/public-inspection/2021-10122/medicare-and-medicaid-programs-covid-19-vaccine-requirements-for-long-term-care-facilities-and>
  - New requirements for educating residents/resident representatives and staff regarding the benefits and potential side effects associated with the COVID-19 vaccine, and offering the vaccine

- LTC facilities must report COVID-19 vaccine and therapeutics treatment information to NHSN effective 5/21/21. To be compliant, facilities must begin reporting data in NHSN by 11:59 p.m. Sunday, June 13, 2021.
- CDC is hosting a training webinar on May 18, 20, 25, 27, 12:30 p.m.
  - Register: [https://cdc.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN\\_DQQITIUsQ7egD7ZPQIraIg](https://cdc.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_DQQITIUsQ7egD7ZPQIraIg)
- HSAG NHSN FAQ Handout:
  - <https://www.hsag.com/globalassets/covid-19/nhsnimportantlinksfaqsfinal508.pdf>
- **Using Motivational Interviewing to Address COVID-19 Vaccine Acceptance**
  - Motivational interviewing is an effective tactic to support non-judgmental, collaborative conversations to educate and support staff and residents in their vaccination decision.
  - View slides 15-23: [https://www.hsag.com/globalassets/covid-19/cdph\\_may12.pdf](https://www.hsag.com/globalassets/covid-19/cdph_may12.pdf)
  - Register at <https://www.hsag.com/covid-19-events> for “Using Motivational Interviewing to Improve COVID-19 Vaccine Acceptance in Nursing Homes” Webinar
    - Tuesday, May 25, 2021 at 10:30pm PT
  - New York times article “Getting to Yes: A Nursing Home’s Mission to Vaccinate its Hesitant Staff” <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/28/health/nursing-home-covid-19-vaccine.html>

**New CDC Guidance—May 13, 2021—This guidance DOES NOT apply to any healthcare setting**

CDC announced that fully vaccinated people no longer need to wear a mask or physically distance in any setting, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance. Fully vaccinated people can also refrain from testing following a known exposure unless they are residents or employees of a correctional or detention facility or a homeless shelter. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>

**Vaccine Questions & Answers**

**Q:** If staff is already vaccinated, do we still need to do education if they have already been vaccinated?

**A:** No, according to the CMS QSO. "CMS added new requirements at §483.80(d)(3)(i)-(vii) for LTC facilities to develop policies and procedures to educate residents or resident representatives and staff regarding the benefits and potential side effects associated with the COVID-19 vaccine and offer the vaccine unless it is medically contraindicated or the resident or staff member has already been immunized."

**Q:** Is there a standardized tool that you recommend for patient and staff education regarding the vaccine, such as a VIS, or could the COVID EUA Fact sheet be used?

**A:** Please refer to the CMS QSO resources listed at <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-21-19-nh.pdf>

**Q:** Our facility is having difficulty administering vaccine doses on time because the pharmacy is backed up. How can we get our hands on the vaccines so we can administer in a timely manner?

**A:** Reach out to other pharmacies that are receiving COVID-19 vaccine (LTC pharmacies participating in the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/downloads/participating-ltc-pharmacy-list.pdf>). In addition, you may also reach out to your local health department.

**Q:** If someone has been fully vaccinated by a World Health Organization (WHO) vaccine (i.e. Sinopharm), can we offer them an FDA authorized vaccine? Note that Sinopharm is the vaccine from China, but the research shows it has low efficacy.

**A:** According to the CDC clinical guidance, if someone has been fully vaccinated by a COVID-19 vaccine with WHO Emergency Use Listing, they are considered fully vaccinated and do not need any additional doses of vaccine. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/clinical-considerations.html>

**Q:** Do we need to test fully vaccinated visitors?

**A:** CDPH AFL 20-22.7 only requires testing of visitors if your facility is in a purple tier. Testing visitors in red, orange, and yellow tiers is an option to augment prevention, but not a requirement.

**Q:** Do other employees have a right to know which staff members are not vaccinated?

**A:** They do not have a right to know due to privacy issues, but it's important to plan out group activities and dining situations in advance to ensure only fully vaccinated staff and residents are participating without masks and distancing. By default, you cannot assume everyone is fully vaccinated, so be cautious and when in doubt, always wear a mask and practice distancing.

**Q:** How can we find out if our new admission is vaccinated?

**A:** SNFs should enroll in the California Immunization Registry (CAIR2) <https://cairweb.org/enroll-now/> to record vaccine doses administered and get access to immunization records (such as flu, COVID-19, pneumococcal vaccine, and others). CAIR2 is a secure, confidential, statewide computerized immunization information system for California residents. Facilities can request an account with the immunization registry that serves their county by visiting the registry website.

- Most California counties are served by **CAIR2**
- San Diego is served by the **San Diego Regional Immunization Registry (SDIR)** <http://www.sdiz.org/cair-sdir/enrollment.html>
- San Joaquin Region (Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Mariposa, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tuolumne counties) is served by **Healthy Futures** <http://www.myhealthyfutures.org/>

**Q:** Does a family member or resident have the right to request that only fully vaccinated staff care for them?

**A:** Regardless of the vaccination status,

Families and residents can certainly make the request, just like they may request their favorite HCP to care for them, however, you can stress that all HCP are taking the same precautions regardless of vaccination including proper PPE, universal masking, maintaining safe distance. It would be nice to be able to honor that request, but it may not always be possible. It would be good to reassure families and residents that your HCP are following the right procedures for infection prevention.

### **Other Questions & Answers**

**Q:** On the CDPH Daily 123 Survey, a question says: "Today's Isolated COVID-19 Status, who are in Isolation—Enter the number of residents who are currently under isolation due to laboratory positive or suspected COVID-19 status, if applicable." My question is, does this include everyone in the yellow zone?

**A:** Remember that there is a distinction between quarantine vs. isolation status. Isolation is used for individuals that are COVID positive and in the red zone. This question is not asking you to include individuals in the yellow zone under quarantine or observation. It is only asking for residents that are isolated in the red zone, meaning they are COVID positive.

**Q:** Is there any specific guidance on the use of personal oscillating fans within patient rooms and/or common areas and is that different than overhead fans?

**A:** There are concerns about the use of fans, especially if the fan is placed in such a way that it is blowing potentially contaminated air from one person to another. Regardless of the county tier it is important to ensure that fans are used in a safe manner. Fans can be used to help improve ventilation, especially if the room has an open window. It is important that the fan doesn't blow potentially contaminated air from one resident to another or into the common area of the facility. If the fan can be put in the window that would be preferable. The bottom line is we want to avoid having fans blowing air from the infected person's airspace around them over another person. Positioning of the fan is key. One suggestion to verify how the air is moving is to close the door and put a piece of paper under the door. If the air blows the paper out of the room and into the hallway, then you'll know it has a positive pressure relationship. If it gets sucked back in, then you'll know there is negative pressure. The point is you don't want the air to be pushed out into parts of the building where people are not wearing PPE.

**Q:** Is there any guidance for green zone residents having their doors closed?

**A:** The doors do not need to be closed for green zone residents.

**Q:** Is the CDPH training for IP online training different from the CDC IP training? Are both required?

**A:** Only one of these courses is required for the initial training. If you took the CDC class prior to 2021, you can take the CDPH class to fulfill the yearly 10-hour CE required. However, there is no partial credit for the CDPH class. You would need to take the entire 14-hour course. The CDPH class is much more relevant to California activities and requirements.

**Q:** For pediatric patients, if the family is not vaccinated, can they have physical contact if they don PPE?

**A:** For pediatric patients, the family can have full contact with PPE if they are unvaccinated. Now pediatric patients between the ages of 12 to 15 are eligible for the vaccination themselves. Strongly encourage visitors to get vaccinated so that physical contact would be more allowable.

**Q:** If a fully vaccinated resident needs a nebulizer treatment but has a fully vaccinated roommate, how do we handle this situation? Will there be updated guidance?

**A:** I am not aware that there will be updated guidance to the recommended PPE or infection control process during aerosol generating procedures with vaccination status. While vaccination does provide a tremendous level of safety, PPE needs to be worn by HCP when indicated for transmission-based precautions when caring for a positive individual regardless of the vaccination status. We have recommended in general, especially with individuals with confirmed COVID, to try to transition the nebulizers to inhalers; or administer them in a private room. HCP should wear appropriate PPE. If it is impossible for a private room, then a fully vaccinated roommate is preferred with the curtains drawn and as much physical space as possible. There are facilities that have faced this situation that have added air scrubbers or worked on improving the ventilation and air exchange in those rooms to get more outdoor air.

**Q:** Are fully vaccinated dialysis patients able to transfer to the green zone, or do they need to stay in the yellow zone?

**A:** There is no requirement by CDPH to place dialysis residents in the yellow zone unless there has been a known exposure. They have always been allowed to go to the green zone, unless your local health department has a different requirement.

**Q:** Is there any guidance for getting a second opinion for tests, rather than simply accepting a positive PCR as it is? We have had situations where a resident tested positive with one lab, but then tested negative with another lab?

**A:** Yes, local health departments have guidance for scenarios like this, which we acknowledge are complicated and can be case by case determinations. Reach out to your local health department on how to manage these. If your local health department is uncertain or unaware that there is guidance from CDPH for local health departments on this specific issue, please contact the CDPH HAI program at [HAIProgram@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:HAIProgram@cdph.ca.gov).

**Q:** Arizona is gathering specimen from breakthrough cases for genomic sequencing to identify the virus lineage. Does California do the same?

**A:** Yes, contact your local public health department for assistance. You can also contact the CDPH HAI program at [HAIProgram@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:HAIProgram@cdph.ca.gov) to help facilitate additional investigation in whole genome testing, especially in fully vaccinated individuals or variants.

**Q:** Los Angeles and eight other counties are in the yellow tier according to the Blueprint for a Safer Economy <https://covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy/>. Do we still need to use eyewear in the green zone?

**A:** No, eyewear is not required in yellow tier counties because according to CDC guidance, eyewear is not required in communities with low/minimal community transmission. Double check with your local health department to make sure that is consistent with their requirements.