



**California Department of Public Health
Center for Health Care Quality
AFC Skilled Nursing Facilities Infection Prevention Call
November 10, 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/en/covid-19/long-term-care-facilities/cdph-ip-webinars-past/>

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

November Weekly Call Schedule

- Tuesday, November 16th: 844.721.7239; Access code: 7993227
- **Wednesday, November 17th Webinar: Cancelled**
- Thursday, November 18th Call: 877.226.8163; Access code: 513711
- Tuesday, November 23rd: 844.721.7239; Access code: 7993227
- **Wednesday, November 24th Webinar: Cancelled**
- **Thursday, November 25th Call: Cancelled**

The Wednesday Webinar & Thursday Call covered the following agenda items:

- **Key Outbreak Prevention & Management Reminders:**
 - Recent uptick in SNF resident cases and several large outbreaks with hospitalizations and deaths affecting both unvaccinated and fully vaccinated residents (but not yet received boosters):
 - Promote staff and resident vaccination, **including boosters.**
 - Actively screen staff and visitors.
 - Enforce source control and personal protective equipment (PPE).
 - Optimize ventilation and ensure appropriate air flow.
 - Plan for using monoclonal antibodies for treatment and prophylaxis.
 - Empower infection preventionists (IP):
 - IP is a full-time job. Do not consider moving IP to “other duties.”
 - A strong IP presence, engaged administrator, and involved medical director will ensure better outcomes.
- **Immunization Branch Updates**
 - Boosters: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html;
www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/COVID-19-Vaccine-Boosters.aspx
 - COVID-19 Vaccination Co-administration Tips
<https://eziz.org/assets/docs/COVID19/IMM-1389.pdf>
 - CDC Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/clinical-considerations/covid-19-vaccines-us.html>

- SNFs that are already or interested in becoming COVID vaccine providers can apply for a CalVax Grant, due December 17, 2021, www.phcdocs.org/Programs/CalVaxGrant
 - CDC COVID-19 Vaccine Access in Long-term Care Settings www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/long-term-care/pharmacy-partnerships.html
 - Influenza Vaccine 2021-2022 Guide <https://eziz.org/assets/docs/IMM-859.pdf>
 - CDC Recommends Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccine for Children 5 to 11 Years: <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1102-PediatricCOVID-19Vaccine.html>
 - CDPH COVID-19 Vaccine Product Guide <https://eziz.org/assets/docs/COVID19/IMM-1399.pdf>
 - CDPH Long-Term Care Facility COVID-19 Vaccine Toolkit [https://eziz.org/assets/docs/COVID19/LTCF Toolkit 10.01.21.pdf](https://eziz.org/assets/docs/COVID19/LTCF_Toolkit_10.01.21.pdf)
- **Testing Task Force Updates**
 - **Updated CDPH Testing Guidance—October 29, 2021** <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Updated-COVID-19-Testing-Guidance.aspx>. The major changes include aligning with the CDC recommendation. After being in close contact with someone who had COVID-19:
 - Everyone: test immediately if develop symptoms
 - Fully vaccinated people should be tested in 5-7 days if remain asymptomatic
 - Previously was 3-5 days after close contact
 - No quarantine required for fully vaccinated individuals
 - Unvaccinated people should test immediately and again in 5-7 days
 - No change to quarantine recommendations
 - **Confirmatory testing for antigen tests:** <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Order-of-the-State-Public-Health-Officer-Unvaccinated-Workers-In-High-Risk-Settings.aspx>
 - **Symptomatic individuals with negative antigen test:**
 - Molecular test (PCR, LAMP, NAAT) confirmation within 48 hours and ideally within 24 hours; Isolate until confirmatory test results are available.
 - **Asymptomatic and positive antigen test:**
 - No further testing needed. Isolate for recommended period by CDC and CDPH. If confirmatory testing is desired to assess for a false positive, repeat with a molecular test (PCR, LAMP, NAAT) within 24-48 hours.
 - **Symptomatic and positive antigen test:**
 - No further testing needed.
 - Isolate for recommended period by CDC and CDPH
 - **Monoclonal Antibody (mAb) Implementation Considerations**
 - Timeliness of mAb treatment and PEP is critical—planning is necessary to avoid delays!
 - SNFs should communicate now (before cases occur) with their local health department (LHD) and Medical and Health Operational Area Coordinator (MHOAC) to discuss:
 - How to forecast mAb doses and supplies needed
 - Process to obtain mAb doses and store product in house (if needed)
 - Process to obtain on-site services from mAb strike teams
 - CDPH November 1, 2021, Health Alert: Anti-SARS-CoV2 mAbs <https://files.constantcontact.com/921e04bb601/40aa96ca-79e3-4622-b5db-09329d5ec324.pdf>
 - CDPH Questions and Answers: Anti-SARS-CoV-2 mAb Treatment Information for Providers and Facilities <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Monoclonal-Antibody-Treatment-Information-for-Providers-and-Facilities.aspx>
 - Public Health Emergency COVID-19 mAb Therapeutics Toolkit <https://www.phe.gov/emergency/events/COVID19/therapeutics/toolkit/Pages/default.aspx>

- Combat COVID: mAb Resources for Health Care Professionals
<https://combatcovid.hhs.gov/hcp/resources>
- NETEC COVID-19 Webinar Series, November 5, 2021, mAb Therapy in Residential Healthcare Settings <https://netec.org/education-and-training/>
- CDPH November 5, 2021, Ordering of Anti-SARS-CoV-2 mAbs
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/monoclonal-allocation-distribution.aspx>

• **Federal Vaccine Requirement**

- CMS Newsroom, November 4, 2021: Biden-Harris Administration Issues Emergency Regulation Requiring COVID-19 Vaccination for Health Care Workers
<https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/biden-harris-administration-issues-emergency-regulation-requiring-covid-19-vaccination-health-care>
- To view the interim final rule with comment period, visit:
<https://www.federalregister.gov/public-inspection/2021-23831/medicare-and-medicaid-programs-omnibus-covid-19-health-care-staff-vaccination>
- To view a list of frequently asked questions, visit:
www.cms.gov/files/document/cms-omnibus-staff-vax-requirements-2021.docx
- CMS Federal Vaccine Requirement Poster: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/covid-19-health-care-staff-vaccination-ifc-6-info-graphic.pdf>

Important Links to State and Federal Guidance	
Important Links and FAQs to State Guidance	https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Guidance.a.spx
July 26, 2021 State Public Health Officer Order: Health Care Worker Protections in High-Risk Settings	https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Order-of-the-State-Public-Health-Officer-Unvaccinated-Workers-In-High-Risk-Settings.aspx
August 5, 2021 State Public Health Officer Order: Health Care Worker Vaccine Requirement	https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Order-of-the-State-Public-Health-Officer-Health-Care-Worker-Vaccine-Requirement.aspx
August 5, 2021 State Public Health Officer Order: Requirements for Visitors in Acute Health Care and Long-Term Care Settings	https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Order-of-the-State-Public-Health-Officer-Requirements-for-Visitors-in-Acute-Health-Care-and-Long-Term-Care-Settings.a.spx
CDPH AFL 21-28: Testing, Vaccination Verification and PPE for HCP at SNFs	https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCO/LCP/Pages/AFL-21-28.aspx
CDPH AFL 20-22.9: Guidance for Limiting the Transmission of COVID-19 in SNFs	https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCO/LCP/Pages/AFL-20-22.aspx
CDPH AFL 20-53.5: Mitigation Plan Recommendations for Testing	https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCO/LCP/Pages/AFL-20-53.aspx
CDPH AFL 21-08.4: Guidance on Quarantine for HCP Exposed to COVID-19	https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCO/LCP/Pages/AFL-21-08.aspx
CDPH AFL 21-34: COVID-19 Vaccine Requirement for HCP	https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCO/LCP/Pages/AFL-21-34.aspx
CMS QSO-20-38-NH: Revision to Long-Term Care (LTC) Facility Testing Requirements	https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-38-nh-revised.pdf

COVID-19 Vaccine Questions & Answers

Q-1: What is the recommendation if an individual receives a full dose (.5) of Moderna as a booster instead of a half dose (.25)?

A: Please see CDC page on vaccine administration errors: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/clinical-considerations/covid-19-vaccines-us.html#Appendix-A>. Inform the recipient of the vaccine administration error. Report the error to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). Determine how the error occurred and implement strategies to prevent it from happening again.

Q-2: Are acute care facilities required to report vaccine data to NHSN?

A: If the hospital participates in the Inpatient Prospective Payment System (IPPS) with CMS and they are an acute care hospital, they need to start reporting Healthcare Provider COVID-19 Vaccination data through NHSN beginning October 1, 2021.

Testing Questions & Answers

Q-3: What are the testing requirements for unvaccinated residents in an ICF/DD home?

A: There are no routine diagnostic testing requirements for unvaccinated residents in a long-term care setting on behalf of the state. Some local health departments have routine screening for residents, so check with them to ensure you are following the local guidance for your county.

Q-4: If fully vaccinated staff travel out of the country and have a direct exposure, but are still in their 90-day window post COVID recovery and are asymptomatic, do we need to retest them at our nursing home when they return?

A: If the individual is within 90 days of their COVID positive test, they do not need to be tested.

Isolation & Quarantine Questions & Answers

Q-5: When a resident is symptomatic, do we have to move them to the yellow zone? Or can we isolate the resident and their roommate in their current room until we receive PCR results?

A: For symptomatic residents pending results of their COVID and influenza tests, we recommend they remain in place, and that staff implement COVID-19 transmission-based precautions. Ideally the symptomatic resident could be moved to a private room while awaiting test results, but we recognize a private room may not exist within your facility. Pull the privacy curtain between the roommate and the symptomatic resident, but do not move them to another zone until a diagnosis is confirmed.

Q-6: A fully vaccinated employee currently has ongoing exposure because of a household member that has COVID. The employee has not had to quarantine due to exposure because of vaccination, but has recently become symptomatic (headache, fatigue). The employee tested negative two days ago before having symptoms. How long does the employee need to be restricted from work?

A: The symptomatic employee should not return to work following an exposure and should be tested. The duration of quarantine depends on the results of the test. If the employee tests positive, they need to be in isolation for ten days from symptom onset. If the test comes back negative, it would be safest to continue to maintain that individual off work while they are continuing to have symptoms. Continue to test periodically during the duration of their quarantine period which would extend 14 days past the end of isolation or the infectious period for the household member who has COVID. Stay in quarantine and get tested to evaluate. The test results will most likely guide the next steps and need for isolation.

Q-7: If a fully vaccinated employee that was exposed 14 days ago (and has not had continued exposure) continues to have symptoms but tests negative, how long does the employee need to quarantine?

A: If the exposed employee reaches the end of their 14-day quarantine following their last known exposure and has had negative tests (both COVID and flu) throughout quarantine and at the end of their 14-day quarantine, and no other potentially infectious etiology has been identified for their symptoms, then they can return to work.

PPE Questions & Answers

Q-8: We've attempted to fit test previous COVID-19 positive staff, but have been unsuccessful because their sense of taste has not fully come back. What options are available?

A: Perform an odor threshold screening with each of the different types of testing solutions to see if one of them can be detected by the employee. There are three different flavors: Isoamyl Acetate, Bitrex, and Saccharin. If the employee fails to detect any of them, you may have to look for other alternatives such as a Powered Air Purifying Respirator (PAPR) until they regain their ability to taste if they work where respiratory protection is required.

Monoclonal Antibodies Questions & Answers

Q-9: When and why should SNF residents who have tested positive for COVID-19 be considered for anti-SARS-CoV-2 mAb treatment?

A: SNF residents should ALWAYS be considered because persons who require care provided in SNFs have multiple risk factors for progressing to severe COVID-19 and/or hospitalization.

Q-10: When and why should anti-SARS-CoV-2 mAb post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) be considered for SNF resident(s)?

A: SNF residents should ALWAYS be considered whenever there are new cases of COVID-19 in the facility, because SNF residents are at high risk of exposure and infection when others are diagnosed in the same facility.

Q-11: How often can mAb PEP be used for the same person?

A: mAb PEP can be dosed every 4 weeks in SNFs with ongoing transmission. Coordinate COVID-19 vaccination schedule (for 1st, 2nd, or 3rd booster doses) around PEP dosing.

Q-12: Can repeated mAb PEP be used in place of COVID-19 vaccination?

A: mAb PEP is not a substitute for vaccination. COVID-19 vaccine 3rd dose/boosters are the most important tool for prevention of COVID-19 cases and outbreaks in SNF.

Visitors Questions & Answers

Q-13: Can visitors dine with residents?

A: Fully vaccinated visitors visiting fully vaccinated residents can eat and dine together in the communal dining room without physical distancing. They do not need to wear a mask while actively eating and drinking, as long as they keep six-foot distancing from other residents and visitors that they are not visiting. Consider dining schedule (e.g., early and late) to accommodate increase in visitor dining during holidays. Existing guidance can be found in CDPH AFL 20-22.9

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/Pages/AFL-20-22.aspx>

Other Questions & Answers

Q-14: How can I get access to the CEUs for the ECHO sessions I attended?

A: Contact Joel Wingelman from HSAG at canursinghomes@hsag.com. HSAG and Stanford offered NHAP & BRN CEUs for the majority of the ECHO sessions.