



## Department of Health

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Date: August 25, 2023  
DAL#: 23-14  
Subject: Nursing home COVID-19 Infection  
Prevention and Control

Dear Nursing Home Operator and Administrator:

The purpose of this letter is to alert nursing home providers to the increase in COVID-19 infections and outbreaks reported over the past several weeks and remind facilities of measures that can be taken to help reduce transmission. Please review with all staff including the direct care, clinical and medical teams to support the highest levels of health and safety for residents and staff during this time of increased outbreaks.

Recent data collected through daily HERDS reports indicates that of the 603 New York State nursing homes, 53 (9%) reported at least one COVID-19 infection among residents on 7/18/23 as compared to 145 (24%) of nursing homes reporting on 8/18/23, signifying an increase of 174%. Upward trending requires all nursing homes to remain vigilant with infection control and prevention measures.

The NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH) recommends that all nursing homes consider taking the following steps to protect residents, staff, and visitors.

1. Ensure that the [Core Principles of COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control \(IPC\)](#) are adhered to at all times:
2. Vaccination for COVID-19

The NYSDOH continues to endorse the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendation that everyone stay [up to date](#) with all CDC recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses. Health care personnel (HCP), patients, and visitors should be [offered resources and counseled](#) about the importance of receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.

On June 15, 2023, the Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) unanimously voted that the COVID-19 vaccine formulation be updated to a monovalent COVID-19 vaccine with an XBB-lineage of the Omicron variant for fall 2023. FDA advised manufacturers (Pfizer, Moderna, and Novavax) to develop vaccines with a monovalent XBB.1.5 composition. It is anticipated that the updated vaccine with XBB.1.5 composition will be broadly available this fall. Upon authorization of the updated vaccine, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) will review evidence to advise upon recommendations.

Therefore, facilities should monitor the CDC and NYSDOH websites frequently for information on updated COVID-19 vaccine administration recommendations. Nursing homes are expected to exercise diligence, act proactively, and document efforts to ensure all residents and HCP who are eligible and consent to vaccination remain up to date with CDC recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses.

Consistent with regulations found at 10 NYCRR Subpart 66- 4.2., nursing homes should be continually reviewing the vaccination status of all residents and staff and should offer and administer CDC recommended doses of COVID-19 vaccine to eligible nursing home residents and HCP who are willing to receive the vaccination.

### 3. COVID-19 treatment

Nursing home providers should review [CDC clinical considerations](#) for care of people with confirmed COVID-19. Information about clinical management and treatment of COVID-19 is stratified by whether the patient has mild or moderate illness that often can be managed in the outpatient setting, or severe or critical illness that requires hospitalization.

Nursing home providers should review information on the use of antiviral medications for treatment of mild-to-moderate COVID-19 in adults who are at high risk for progression to severe disease.

### 4. COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations

Nursing homes should adhere to all applicable recommendations from the [CDC Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Pandemic](#) and should follow guidance from CDC.

### 5. Use of face coverings or facemasks for source control

Nursing homes should have policies in place for implementing source control based on the [current CDC recommendations](#), including information available in [Appendix: Considerations for Implementing Broader Use of Masking in Healthcare Settings](#)

In addition to guidance available from CDC, local data such as the trends in COVID-19 HCP infections, infections among new admissions, and transmission events within the facility should be considered.

In summary, this correspondence is intended to provide reminders and recommended model practices for NYS nursing homes in light of recent increases in COVID-19 nursing home outbreaks. Thank you for your ongoing commitment and efforts to protect the health and safety of your residents, staff and visitors. If you have further questions regarding this DAL, please contact: [covidnursinghomeinfo@health.ny.gov](mailto:covidnursinghomeinfo@health.ny.gov), or [icp@health.ny.gov](mailto:icp@health.ny.gov)

Sincerely,

Adam Herbst,  
Deputy Commissioner  
Office of Aging and Long Term Care  
New York State Department of Health

Additional resources are listed below:

CMS

Core Principles of COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)

<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-39-nh-revised.pdf>

CDC

Hand hygiene

<https://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/pdfs/Provider-Factsheet-508.pdf>

Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>

Visual alerts -Cover Your Cough

[https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/protect/cdc\\_cough.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/protect/cdc_cough.pdf)

Stay Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html>

Vaccines for COVID-19

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html>

Clinical Course: Progression, Management, and Treatment

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/clinical-care/clinical-considerations-course.html>