

# The Academy Weekly

News & Information for LTC Providers



The Academy of Senior Health Sciences, Inc.

[www.seniorhealthsciences.org](http://www.seniorhealthsciences.org)

Week of 08 March 2020

COVID-19 continues to dominate the news. We have included the latest information in this newsletter, such as the waiver of stay requirements for Medicare residents, along with a summary of the updates from last week. We know it can be overwhelming at times, but it is important to stay informed as the virus moves through communities...

## Ohio News

[Governor closes bars, restaurants as confirmed cases climb](#)  
[COVID-19 in review: NH visitation, communal gatherings ban](#)  
[SOS issues memo on voting for those confined in NHs, healthcare settings](#)

## National News

[CMS issues emergency waivers in wake of COVID-19](#)  
[CMS issues FAQ on benefits; prices for COVID-19 tests](#)  
[CMS MLN Connects](#)

## Ohio News

Governor closes bars, restaurants as confirmed cases climb

Governor Mike DeWine closed all bars and restaurants in Ohio on Sunday, limiting them to carry out and delivery only. ([Click here to view the order.](#)) Part of the concern was the upcoming St. Patrick's Day celebrations that could create large gatherings allowing the virus to spread quickly in those environments. The order was supported by many of the business community associations and advocates. Furthermore, many communities have closed public places such as libraries and recreation centers in an attempt to contain the virus. These moves come as the number of confirmed cases in Ohio increased over the weekend to 37 in 11 different counties scattered across the state. State officials iterated the objective is to contain the spread of the virus as much as possible so the healthcare system can handle all of the acute cases. They also reminded people to do their part by washing their hands or use hand sanitizer frequently, keeping a safe distance from others, coughing into one's elbow, and to stay home when sick. ([Back to top.](#))

### **COVID-19 in review: NH visitation, communal gatherings ban**

There were updates by the CDC, CMS and ODH this past week related to COVID-19. Below is a summary of the updates along with links to view all the information:

- CMS updated its guidance to NH related to visitors and communal gatherings. The revised QSO-20-14-NH (03-13-2020) document essentially bans visitors except for end of life situations and to provide necessary healthcare services. It also bans communal activities, including meals. [Please click here and read the entire document for more information.](#)
- ODH made a similar move to ban visitors by updating its previous order. [Please click here to read the entire document for more information.](#)
- The CDC issued a checklist for NH preparedness and updated its recommendations for nursing homes. Please click the appropriate link below for more information.
  - [CDC Recommendations](#)
  - [CDC Checklist for NH Preparedness](#)
- CMS issued emergency policies for COVID-19 over the weekend. (See separate story in National News section.) Some of these impact nursing homes. [Please click here to view a fact sheet by provider type.](#)
- SOS issues memo to county boards of elections regarding voting procedures for individuals confined to healthcare settings, including NHs. (See separate story below.) [Please click here to view the memo.](#)

Be on the lookout for *Academy Updates* in your inbox with updated information as it becomes available.

[\(Back to top.\)](#)

## SOS issues memo on voting for those confined to NHs, healthcare settings

The Ohio Secretary of State's office issued a memo on March 14 to county boards of election on how to handle situations when a person is in a healthcare setting. The memo, titled "Procedures for Assisting Voter Confined to a Medical Care Facility," was issued as Ohio prepares for its primary vote on Tuesday. According to the SOS office, "In an effort to ensure both public health and access to voting are appropriately addressed in this unique time, the attached guidance has been given to county boards of elections regarding voters in hospitals and nursing homes where they or their minor child are confined on Election Day. This memo is informed by direction from ODH Director Dr. Amy Acton." [Please review the memo by clicking here.](#) [\(Back to top.\)](#)



## National News

### CMS issues emergency waivers in wake of COVID-19

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) issued emergency waivers to better allow the healthcare system to cope with COVID-19. The waivers are retroactive to March 1. Below are some of the waivers:

**Skilled Nursing Facilities** CMS is waiving the requirement at Section 1812(f) of the Social Security Act for a 3-day prior hospitalization for coverage of a skilled nursing facility (SNF) stay provides temporary emergency coverage of (SNF services without a qualifying hospital stay, for those people who need to be transferred as a result of the effect of a disaster or emergency. In addition, for certain beneficiaries who recently exhausted their SNF benefits, it authorizes renewed SNF coverage without first having to start a new benefit period.

Second, CMS is waiving 42 CFR 483.20 to provides relief to SNFs on the timeframe requirements for Minimum Data Set assessments and transmission.

### Provider Locations

Temporarily waiver requirements that out of state providers be licensed in the state where

they are providing services when they are licensed in another state. This applies to Medicare and Medicaid.

### **1135 Waivers**

CMS is also allowing states to request a Section 1135 waiver, which would allow states to waive Medicaid and CHIP authorities during an emergency. Examples of a 1135 waiver include:

- Waive prior authorization requirements in fee-for-service programs
- Permits providers located out of state/territory to provide care to another state's Medicaid enrollees impacted by the emergency
- Temporarily suspend certain provider enrollment and revalidation requirements to increase access to care
- Temporarily waive requirements that physicians and other health care professionals be licensed in the state in which they are providing services, so long as they have an equivalent licensing in another state, and
- Temporarily suspend requirements for certain pre-admission and annual screenings for nursing home residents

For more information on the waivers, including how they impact each provider type, [please see the fact sheet available by clicking here.](#)

For more information on the waivers, including retroactive date, blanket waivers, and how to apply for single case waivers, [please see the MLN Article by clicking here.](#)

[\(Back to top.\)](#)

### **CMS issues FAQ on benefits; prices for COVID-19**

From CMS: "The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services issued Frequently Asked Questions to Ensure Individuals, Issuers and States have Clear Information on Coverage Benefits for COVID-19. This action is part of the broader, ongoing effort by the White House Coronavirus Task Force to ensure that all Americans – particularly those at high-risk of complications from the COVID-19 virus – have access to the health benefits that can help keep them healthy while helping to contain the spread of this disease.

The COVID-19 FAQs for EHB can be found here:

<https://www.cms.gov/CCIIO/Resources/Fact-Sheets-and-FAQs/Downloads/EHB-Benchmark-Coverage-of-COVID-19.pdf>

CMS also announced the prices for COVID-19 tests. CDC developed tests are about \$36 and

non-CDC tests are about \$51: "The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is posting a fact sheet to the CMS.gov website to aid Medicare providers with information relating to the pricing of both the CDC and non CDC tests. You can find the fact sheet here: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/mac-covid-19-test-pricing.pdf>"

[\(Back to top.\)](#)

## **CMS MLN Connects**

### News

- [CMS Sends More Detailed Guidance to Providers about COVID-19](#)
- [HHS Finalizes Historic Rules to Provide Patients More Control of Their Health Data](#)
- [Quality Payment Program: MIPS 2019 Data Submission Deadline March 31](#)
- [Hospital Quality Reporting: Comment on Draft QRDA I Implementation Guide by April 1](#)
- [Inclusion of Lower Limb Prosthetics in DMEPOS Prior Authorization](#)
- [Clean Hands Count: Prevent and Control Infections](#)
- [March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month](#)

### Compliance

- [Incorrect Billing of HCPCS L8679 - Implantable Neurostimulator, Pulse Generator, Any Type](#)

### Events

- [Open Payments: Your Role in Health Care Transparency Call — March 19](#)
- [Medicare Promoting Interoperability Program Call for Measures Webinar — March 19](#)
- [Ground Ambulance Organizations: Data Collection for Medicare Providers Call — April 2](#)
- [Interoperability and Patient Access Final Rule Call — April 7](#)
- [LTCH and IRF Quality Reporting Programs: SPADEs Webinar — April 14](#)

### MLN Matters® Articles

- [NCD 20.4 Implantable Cardiac Defibrillators \(ICDs\)](#)
- [Section 1876 and 1833 Cost Plan Enrollee Access to Care through Original Medicare](#)

- [April 2020 Integrated Outpatient Code Editor \(I/OCE\) Specifications Version 21.1](#)
- [Proper Use of Modifier 59 — Revised](#)
- [Quarterly Update to the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Database \(MPFSDB\) - April 2020 Update — Revised](#)

### Publications

- [Evacuating and Receiving Patients in the Midst of a Wildfire](#)
- [Administrative Simplification: Eligibility and Benefits Transaction Basics](#)

### Multimedia

- [Dementia Care Call: Audio Recording and Transcript](#)

[View this edition as a PDF \(PDF\)](#)

[View this edition on the web.](#)

[\(Back to top.\)](#)

////////////////////////////////////

#### **ODDS AND ENDS**

##### ***Latest ODH weekly PPE survey***

Here is the link to the latest weekly ODH survey of PPE for healthcare providers. Please complete this survey every week so ODH knows how well providers are supplied with PPE:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/J68PG8S>

##### ***CDC issues travel guidance***

The CDC issued updated travel guidance this past weekend: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends all persons defer any travel on cruise ships, including river cruises, worldwide because of the increased risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission onboard ships. [Please see the full memo for more information.](#)

////////////////////////////////////

#### **NOTABLE DATES OR EVENTS**

[IPRO QI Collaborative](#)  
Sign-up closes April 8

OANAC/ASHS Spring  
Conference  
May 15

[CGS: myCGS ATC](#)  
June 11, 2020

[Click here to view CGS  
Part A training events](#)

[Click here to view CGS  
Part B training events](#)

[Follow on Twitter](#)

[Friend on Facebook](#)

[Follow on Instagram](#)

---

*Copyright © 2020 The Academy of Senior Health Sciences Inc., All rights reserved.*  
Membership.

The content of this newsletter is for informational purposes only. The information is only as accurate as its sources and may change at any time. The newsletter may contain references to policy, regulations, rules, and laws and is for informational purposes only. Please consult the appropriate professional before making any decisions.

**Our mailing address is:**

The Academy of Senior Health Sciences Inc.

17 S. High St.

Suite 770

Columbus, OH 43215

The Academy of Senior Health Sciences, Inc. is a preferred provider of BELTSS continuing education units.