

Policy and Procedure: Indoor/Outdoor Family Visitation IL & IN

Effective: Outdoor 7/4/2020 Indoor added:
7/14/2020

Revised: 3-11-2021 CMS QSO-20-39NH;
3-22-2021

This Policy may change or be revised based on CDC/CMS/ State Public Health Department changes or recommendations.

This facility has adopted the revised guidance of CMS QSO-20-39NH Org: 9/17/2020 and Revised 3-10-2021

For specific guidance and procedural implementation and implications see adopted CMS QSO-20-39NH revised 3-10-2021 (attached.)

BACKGROUND

On 3/10/2021 CMS released guidance on Nursing Home Visitation- COVID-19, including the impact of COVID-19 vaccination. CMS in conjunction with the Centers Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is updating its visitation guidance accordingly, but emphasizing the importance of maintaining infection control practices, given the continued risks of COVID-19 transmission.

Visitation will be conducted through different means based on the facilities structure and residents needs. Visits will be conducted using the core principals and best practices that reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

Core Principles of COVID-19 infection prevention for visitors

- Screening of all visitors for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 including temperature checks and questions/observations of signs and symptoms or those who have had close contact with someone with COVID-19 infection in the prior 14 days (regardless of the visitor's vaccination status).
- Hand Hygiene (use of alcohol rub is preferred). Hand hygiene before and after each visit.
- Face mask covering. Additional PPE may be required depending on the circumstance. If the facility has adequate supplies of facemasks, the facility may request visitors utilize the facility supplied facemask when visiting.
- Social distancing of at least 6 feet between persons.

CMS and CDC continue to recommend facilities, residents, and families adhere to the core principles of COVID-19 infection, including physical distancing (maintaining at least 6 feet apart between people). This continues to be the safest way to prevent the spread of COVID-19, particularly if either party has not been fully vaccinated. If the resident is fully vaccinated, they



Center for Clinical Standards and Quality/Survey & Certification Group

Ref: QSO-20-39-NH

REVISED 11/12/2021

DATE: September 17, 2020
TO: State Survey Agency Directors
FROM: Director
Survey and Certification Group

SUBJECT: Nursing Home Visitation - COVID-19 (*REVISED*)

Memorandum Summary

- CMS is committed to continuing to take critical steps to ensure America's healthcare facilities are prepared to respond to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Public Health Emergency (PHE).
- **Visitation Guidance:** CMS is issuing new guidance for visitation in nursing homes during the COVID-19 PHE, including the impact of COVID-19 vaccination.
- *Visitation is now allowed for all residents at all times.*

Background

Nursing homes have been severely impacted by COVID-19, with outbreaks causing high rates of infection, morbidity, and mortality.¹ The vulnerable nature of the nursing home population combined with the inherent risks of congregate living in a healthcare setting have required aggressive efforts to limit COVID-19 exposure and to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within nursing homes.

In March 2020, CMS issued memorandum QSO-20-14-NH providing guidance to facilities on restricting visitation of all visitors and non-essential healthcare personnel, except for certain compassionate care situations, such as an end-of-life situation. In May 2020, CMS released Nursing Home Reopening Recommendations, which provided additional guidance on visitation for nursing homes as their states and local communities progress through the phases of reopening.

While CMS guidance has focused on protecting nursing home residents from COVID-19, we recognize that physical separation from family and other loved ones has taken a physical and emotional toll on residents and their loved ones. Residents may feel socially isolated, leading to increased risk for depression, anxiety, and expressions of distress. Residents living with cognitive impairment or other disabilities may find visitor restrictions and other ongoing changes related to

¹ Information on outbreaks and deaths in nursing homes may be found at <https://data.cms.gov/stories/s/COVID-19-Nursing-Home-Data/bkwz-xpvg>.