



Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

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TO: All Hospice Agencies and All Long-Term Care Facilities

FROM: Dean Linneman, DRL Director
Lisa Coots, Bureau Chief, Home Care and Rehabilitative Standards
Shelly Williamson, SLCR Administrator

DATE: March 20, 2020

RE: Guidance on Hospice Care in Long Term Care Facilities

There has been an influx of questions concerning the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) QSO-20-14 NH Guidance for Infection Control and Prevention of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Nursing Homes (Revised), especially in regard to exceptions to restrictions for health care workers. Page two of the QSO memo states other health care workers, such as hospice workers, EMS personnel, or dialysis technicians that provide care to residents should be permitted to come into the facility as long as they meet the CDC guidelines for health care workers.

Our highest priority is to keep people safe. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, health care personnel who work in multiple locations may pose higher risk of transmission. To protect both the residents, as well as all the healthcare workers from both the hospice and long term care facility, we are offering the following guidance.

Of utmost importance is ensuring each resident receives appropriate care while limiting the number of people entering the facility. Hospice agencies and facilities need to work together to ensure resident needs are being met. These needs can hopefully be met by facility staff in coordination with offsite consultation and coordination with the hospice provider, such as virtual communications (phone, video-communication, etc.).

During compassionate care situations, such as when end of life is imminent, facilities should ensure residents receive appropriate care and may allow hospice staff, including non-essential health care personnel (such as clergy, hospice social workers, etc.) access during this time. Decisions about when to allow visitation during these end of life situations should be well coordinated and made on a case by case basis.

In this time of crisis, it is imperative the healthcare industry works together to provide patients and residents with the care they need, while making every effort to ensure their safety with the resources available.

DHSS encourages providers to view the information at the following link for the most up-to-date information:

<https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus/>

www.health.mo.gov

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