

COVID-19 – Update #1



EMAIL UPDATE

Dear AHCA/NCAL Members:

As concerns arise with the emerging 2019 Coronavirus, officially named COVID-19, AHCA/NCAL is working nationally with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to ensure our members receive appropriate supplies and guidance to prevent the spread of this disease.

The Coronavirus is spread from person-to-person through droplets suspended in the air, very similar to how influenza spreads. During this time, centers should review their [infection prevention and control](#) policies and procedures for droplet precautions among residents and staff. The CDC is currently recommending Standard, Contact, and Airborne Precautions, including the use of eye protection when providing care for patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19.

The CDC does not currently recommend the general public to use facemasks. Instead, they recommend following [everyday preventive actions](#), such as washing your hands, using alcohol-based hand sanitizers, covering your cough, and staying home when you are sick. In addition, centers should educate families and visitors on signs and symptoms of respiratory illness and encourage them to visit with loved ones through alternative means when they are ill, such as telephone, Skype, or wearing a mask during visits.

Due to decreases in exports from select countries, including China, India, and Taiwan, and increases in demand, manufacturers of select types of personal protective equipment (PPE) are reporting an increase in volume of orders and challenges meeting order demands. Plans are already underway to surge manufacturing globally.

The CDC has offered strategies for health care providers on how to optimize supplies of N95 respirators in the face of decreasing supply, which can be found [here](#). These strategies include minimizing the number of health care professionals who need to use respiratory protection. Use alternatives to N95 respirators, such as facemasks where feasible, and prioritize the use of N95 respirators for those with the highest risk of acquiring infection or experiencing complications from infection.

You can learn more about the CDC's strategies for optimizing the supply of PPE [here](#). If members are experiencing challenges to meet their PPE requests, please contact your local and state health departments.

AHCA/NCAL will continue to advocate for and support our members as we monitor the situation. Thank you to all members for keeping our residents and communities safe.

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