



## Department of Health

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DATE: March 20, 2020

### **Nursing Home Advisory Recommendations to Protect Nursing Home Residents**

**Please distribute immediately to:**  
All Nursing Home Administrators, Directors of Nursing, Social Workers

#### **Recommendations to Support Resident Physical Health**

- Cancel communal dining and all group activities, such as internal and external group activities.
- Provide reminders to restrict visitation of **all** visitors and non-essential health care personnel, except for certain compassionate care situations, such as imminent end-of-life situation. In those cases, visitors will be limited to a specific room only.
  - For individuals that enter in compassionate situations (e.g., end-of-life care), facilities must continue to reinforce with visitors good hand hygiene practices and use personal protective equipment (PPE), such as facemasks.
  - Decisions about visitation during an end-of-life situations should be made on a case-by-case basis, which should include careful screening of the visitor (including clergy, bereavement counselors, etc.) for fever or respiratory symptoms.
- Allow all provisional employees of Nursing Homes to work with supervision. Safety is paramount; Supervision requirements will continue per statute.
- Implement active health screening every shift, at least every eight hours or as needed of residents and staff for fever and respiratory symptoms.
- Health Care Worker Daily Alerts - For all staff at the beginning of their shift for fever and if respiratory symptoms develop, actively take their temperature and document presence or absence of shortness of breath, new or change in cough, and sore throat. If employees develop signs and symptoms of a respiratory infection while on the job they should: Immediately stop work, put on a facemask, and self-isolate at home; Inform the facility's Infection Preventionist; and contact their local health department for next steps.
- Facilities should review and revise how they interact with vendors and delivery drivers, agency staff, EMS personnel, equipment vendors, transportation providers (e.g., when taking residents to offsite appointments, etc.), and other non-health care providers (e.g., food delivery, etc.), and take necessary actions to prevent any potential transmission. For example, do not have supply vendors transport supplies inside the facility. Have them dropped off at a dedicated location (e.g., loading dock). Facilities can allow entry of these visitors, if needed, as long as they are following the appropriate CDC

guidelines for Transmission-Based Precautions. This creates a safe mechanism for deliveries.

- Creating/increasing listserv communication to update families. Assign staff to serve as the primary contact to families for inbound calls and conducting regular outbound calls to keep families up to date.
- Advise visitors and any individual who enter the Nursing Home (e.g., hospice staff), to monitor for signs and symptoms of respiratory infection for at least 14 days after exiting the facility. If symptoms occur, advise them to self-isolate at home, contact their healthcare provider, and immediately notify the facility of the date they were in the facility, the individuals they were in contact with, and the locations within the facility where they visited. Facilities should immediately screen the individuals of reported contact, and take all necessary actions based on their findings.

## Recommendations to Support Resident Mental and Emotional Health

- 32 National Parks you can explore from your couch, from the Grand Canyon to Yellowstone: (requires google earth)
  - Article: <https://www.insider.com/national-parks-america-virtual-tours-3d-visit-2020-3>
- New York Public Library is offering more than 300,000 e-books and audiobooks available for free:
  - Source: <https://www.nypl.org/books-music-movies/ebookcentral>
- Museums are offering free virtual tours:
  - Article: <https://www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/museums-with-virtual-tours>
  - Article: <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/art-institute-chicago-offers-open-access-44000-images-1377739>

### Additional Resources

- Metropolitan Opera: Nightly Met Opera Streams: <https://www.metopera.org/>
  - Article explaining the program: <https://www.metopera.org/about/press-releases/met-to-launch-nightly-met-opera-streams-a-free-series-of-encore-live-in-hd-presentations-streamed-on-the-company-website-during-the-coronavirus-closure/>
- Zoos are bringing their animals online during COVID-19 closures:
  - Article: <https://www.inquirer.com/health/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid19-zoos-closed-philadelphia-elmwood-park-cape-may-animals-20200319.html>
- NPR: NPR is compiling a list of live virtual concerts to watch.
  - Article: <https://www.npr.org/2020/03/17/816504058/a-list-of-live-virtual-concerts-to-watch-during-the-coronavirus-shutdown>
- NASA: NASA has put their entire collection of images, sounds, and videos of galaxies, planets, and space missions online, publicly accessible and copyright free for anyone to view or use.
  - Source: <https://www.nasa.gov/>

**Articles:**

Reviewing the Effectiveness of Music Interventions in Treating Depression:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5500733/>

- “In particular, elderly participants showed impressive improvements when they listened to music or participated in music therapy projects.”
- “Dementia patients showed significant cognitive and emotional benefits when they sang, or listened to familiar songs”