

COVID-19 LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY GUIDANCE:

Movement of patients between hospitals and Long-Term Care Facilities (Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) and Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly (RCFEs))

Guidance for hospitals receiving a patient from a Long-Term Care Facility (LTCF):

- Hospitals **should test** all patients who reside in or are being discharged to a congregate living facility **within 7 days prior to discharge to LTCF**. Patients **do not** need repeat testing if patient has tested positive within the prior 3 months.
- Testing for patients being discharged to a LTCF should be done at a lab with a turn-around time of 48 hours or less. Discharges of residents without compatible symptoms of COVID-19 should not be delayed, if results are pending, as patient is to remain in quarantine upon arrival at facility.
- **Alert Contra Costa Public Health Department: email: cocohelp@cchealth.org** 7 days a week or call (925) 313-6740, 8am-4:30pm Monday – Friday to inform them about a confirmed COVID-19 positive patient that resides in a long-term care facility or a residential care facility.
 - Public Health will contact the facility to assess the situation.

Guidance for hospitals discharging a patient to a Long-Term Care Facility (LTCF):

- For all patients with planned or anticipated discharge to LTCF who have not had a negative COVID-19 test within the past 7 days:
 - Hospitals should retest patient for COVID-19.
 - Once the test result is available, discharge planning should follow the guidance below, based on the test result.
 - Discharges of residents without compatible symptoms of COVID-19 should not be delayed, if results are pending, as patient is to remain in quarantine upon arrival at facility.
- For patients who had tested **positive** for COVID-19:
 - Hospitalized residents that tested positive for COVID-19 and meet criteria for discontinuation of isolation (e.g. transmission-precautions) do not need any further testing for 3 months and do not require any quarantine upon SNF admission or readmission.
 - If patient are still requiring isolation/transmission-based precautions:
 - Patients should NOT be discharged to a RCFE, and discharge should be made to a SNF or Alternate Care Site (ACS) prepared to monitor and care for the patient until they are recovered and no longer require monitoring for COVID-19 infection or transmission-based precautions. In the case that the patient came from the RCFE as a positive case, the patient can be readmitted back to



the RCFE if the patient can be maintained isolated in their room with appropriate transmission-based isolation precautions in place with appropriate clinical monitoring capacity.

- Patient may be discharged to a SNF:
 - Hospitals should call the Public Health Department (925) 313-6740; Monday-Friday, 8am-4:30pm or email cocohelp@cchealth.org 7 days a week at least 24-48 hours before the proposed discharge:
 - Public health will need to assess the SNF for their readiness to accept the patient and may also recommend potential placements for COVID+ patients depending on the circumstance/placement options.
 - Hospitals will get a call back within 24 hours (during business hours) with the assessment on whether the discharge can proceed as proposed.
 - Most patients will meet criteria for SNF placement given need for medical monitoring in context of COVID-19 infection, if not high-risk, they may be placed at an ACS, if available.
 - Patients may return to their prior SNF bed without obtaining public health approval if they were previous residents of the facility within the last 14 days. If the patient is a resident of RCFE and a known positive who had been isolating at the facility they may be readmitted to their facility without public health approval as described above.
- For patients with a hospital stay who test **negative** for COVID-19 or have pending lab results without compatible symptoms of COVID-19 maybe discharged to SNF or RCFE.
 - If the LTCF is **currently experiencing an outbreak**, or closed to new admissions due to Public Health Monitoring patients/residents, patients/residents, including known positives who were in the facility prior to hospital admissions, may return to their prior SNF or RCFE bed without obtaining public health approval if they had been in the facility within the last 14 days. Note: No Health Department notification is needed for transfers between hospitals.

Long term care facilities (LTCF) should accept the following types of patients:

- Patients who tested **negative** for COVID-19 or patients with pending results who did not have compatible symptoms of COVID-19:
 - **Readmissions** after stay at an outside facility **do not need to be placed in quarantine** unless they were at a facility with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 transmission, or concern for COVID exposure at facility. If concerns exist, residents should be tested and quarantined according to guidance for new admits.



- **New admits to facilities** need to remain in quarantine for 14 days in a single room in an area reserved for quarantine of new admissions. Full PPE should be utilized with these patients in quarantine. Re-testing should be done by the facility before removing patient from their quarantine per the [Health Officer order](#). Facilities may consider using acute care hospital days as part of the quarantine observation period for new admissions as long as the hospital has no concern for transmission or outbreak between staff or residents within the facility, the acute care hospital is implementing a process for screening new admissions and monitoring patients for hospital-onset COVID-19, and has designated COVID-19 unit(s) with dedicated staff and minimal cross-over, and the patient had COVID testing prior to discharge to the facility.
 - If the patient develops symptoms, re-testing should be conducted by the facility. If the patient remains asymptomatic, patient should be retested prior to release from quarantine.
 - **Note:** If the patient has had a COVID-19 infection in the past 90 days and have cleared their infection and currently have no symptoms or other concerns, they do not need to be quarantined, and maybe placed/considered “green” zone residents. If it has been > 90 days since the patient’s infection they would need to be quarantined as a new admission as note above.
- Residents that have frequent visits to outside facilities for care needs do not require repeated quarantine but should be considered for more frequent surveillance testing.
- For patients being discharged to a LTCF who tested **positive** for COVID-19 on their most recent test, **COVID-19 testing does not need to be repeated.**
 - Patients/residents, who are known positives who were in their facility prior to hospital admissions, may return to their prior SNF or RCFE bed. If a resident is newly positive, they should not return to their RCFE until cleared of their infection.
 - New positive should be discharged to SNF or Alternate Care Site (ACS) prepared to monitor and care for the patient until they are no longer requiring isolation (e.g. Transmission-based precautions).
 - In the case that the patient came from the RCFE as a positive case, the patient can be readmitted back to the RCFE if the patient can be maintained isolated in their room with appropriate transmission-based isolation precautions in place and adequate clinical monitoring can be performed.
 - Isolation/Precautions at the LTCF may or may not still be required, depending on the following:
 - Patients who tested positive should be isolated for a total of at least 10 days (or 20 days if hospitalized in the intensive care unit) after symptom onset with at least 24 hours of fever resolution and other symptoms improving (or



10 days from date of lab test if asymptomatic). The total number of days is inclusive of hospital isolation.

- If the isolation period is over and patient is recovered, the LTCF should receive the patient **without requiring a negative COVID-19 test result** and without the need for transmission-based isolation precautions. These patients maybe placed/considered “green” zone residents.
 - Patients who have cleared their infection in the hospital and no longer need transmission-based isolation precautions may be discharged to their RCFE.
 - Patients who were discharged to a SNF may return to their RCFE if they have cleared their infection and no longer need transmission-based isolation precautions.

Guidance for Transfers between LTCFs

- Transfers should never occur in context of outbreak investigation without notification and consultation with Public Health
 - LTCFs should call the Public Health Department (925) 313-6740; Monday-Friday, 8am-430pm or email cocohelp@cchealth.org 7 days a week at least 24-48 hours before the proposed transfer
- For patients who have previously tested **positive within the past 3 months** for COVID-19 and no longer in isolation period, do not need testing prior to transfer and do not need to be quarantined at accepting facility
- For patients transferring from another LTCF who have previously tested **negative** for COVID-19 or have pending lab results without compatible symptoms of COVID-19:
 - Do not need to remain in quarantine as long as both transferring and accepting facility do not have current outbreak investigation or concern for exposure.
 - Readmissions after stay of any length at an outside facility do not need to be placed in quarantine unless they were at a facility with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 transmission.

For more information please visit <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/>.

