



Indiana
Department
of
Health

Long-term Care **NEWSLETTER**

LTC Newsletter 2023-01
Jan. 5, 2023

LTC Update:

- **Facility License Renewals – Reminder**
- **Portable Space Heaters – Reminder**
- **Statewide NATCEP Waiver and Nurse Aides in Training**
- **Update From CDC on COVID-19 and Available Vaccines**

Facility License Renewals – Reminder

Please remember that long-term care facilities are required by state rules to submit license renewal applications no later than 45 days before the current license expires. This allows adequate time for IDOH to review the hundreds of renewal applications received each year. Applications submitted more than 45 days after the current license expires will not be accepted, and the provider must reapply for a license.

The Division of Long-term Care will conduct an offsite licensure investigation survey when a facility fails to submit the renewal application according to the state rules for licensure. The deficient practice will require a plan of correction. Potential fines of \$250 - \$500 will be given depending on how late the application was submitted.

Comprehensive Care

410 IAC 16.2-3.1-2(h)(1)

Licenses (h) For the renewal of a license, the director may issue a full license for any period up to one (1) year, issue a probationary license, or deny a license application upon receipt and

review of the following requirements: (1) The facility shall submit a renewal application to the director at least forty-five (45) days prior to the expiration of the license.

Residential Care

410 IAC 16.2-5-1.1 Licenses (1) The facility shall submit a renewal application to the director at least forty-five (45) days prior to the expiration of the license.

Portable Space Heaters – Reminder

During the recent extreme cold temperatures a number of facilities used space heaters to supplement resident areas in nursing facilities. **NFPA 101A LSC Chapter 18.7.8, and Chapter 19.7.8** specifically state, *“Portable space heating devices shall be prohibited in all health care occupancies unless used in nonsleeping staff and employee areas where the heating elements do not exceed 212 degrees Fahrenheit (100 degrees Celsius).”*

Given the extreme weather the state experienced recently, facilities should consider including in their emergency preparedness programs All-Hazards assessment the loss of a facility’s power and/or primary heat source and then develop a plan accordingly. There are no circumstances when a portable space heater should be included in a CMS-certified health facility’s emergency preparedness plan.

Statewide NATCEP Waiver and Nurse Aides in Training

CMS notified IDOH on Sept. 29 that our statewide waiver request was approved for NATCEP to allow more time to certify nurse aides. This waiver was granted due to testing capacity issues. There are no identified nurse aide training capacity issues. **The approval of this waiver is valid until the end of the PHE or March 29, whichever comes first.** Even with this approved waiver, there should be no delay in training and testing nurse aides. The aides may continue to work in the facility past 120 days, as long as the aide and facility are attempting to get the aide certified as soon as possible.

Facilities are no longer required to report nurse aides working, who are not yet certified, on the REDCap Nurse Aide in Training Registry. This registry is discontinued. With only approximately 30% of facilities reporting, it did not provide an adequate sample to demonstrate capacity issues related to testing at the time the statewide waiver was granted by CMS, and we thank those facilities that reported nurse aides in training on this registry.

Any questions regarding the statewide CMS NATCEP waiver should be directed to [Suzanne Williams](#).

Update From CDC on COVID-19 and Available Vaccines

A recent [CDC report](#) showed that adults ages 65 years and older continue to have the highest COVID-related mortality rates. Adults ages 85 years and older remain at particularly high risk of dying of COVID-19. The proportion of COVID-related deaths accounted for by adults in this age group increased during April–September 2022 from 28% to around 40% of COVID-related deaths.

The COVID-related death rate among unvaccinated people who are 65 years and older has consistently been higher than the rate among vaccinated people. [CDC data](#) on nursing homes show that COVID-19 case rates are higher in nursing home residents who have not received all recommended doses than those who are up to date. COVID-19 vaccination rates, as of Dec. 11 show that 43% of nursing home residents in the United States are up to date with COVID-19 vaccination compared to only 10% of nursing home staff.

The updated (bivalent) COVID-19 boosters are the best protection against COVID-19 variants causing illness right now. Real-world data on the effectiveness of bivalent boosters can be accessed from [MMWR Dec 2, 2022](#), [MMWR IVY network, 18 states](#), and [MMWR VISION network, Nine states](#).

To improve vaccination, please use the following strategies:

1. Please use this [Sample-Letter-to-Residents.pdf \(cdc.gov\)](#) to advocate for COVID-19 vaccination for your residents.
2. Advocate for a strong and clear recommendation from the patient's healthcare provider to help increase the likelihood that a patient will agree to be vaccinated.
3. CDC is creating COVID-19 vaccine sub-provider agreements to allow LTC facilities that are not directly enrolled as providers in the CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Program to access COVID-19 vaccine doses through enrolled pharmacy providers for direct administration by the LTC facilities to their residents and staff. See [Long Term Care Facilities Enrolling in CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Program | CDC](#) for more information.
4. HHS has approved the use of single-dose vials of the Pfizer vaccine for the core LTC pharmacy partners in order to improve access. LTC may now order COVID-19 vaccine doses in single-dose vials.

Please let us know if you have any questions or need assistance obtaining or providing the vaccine.