

Long-Term Care Facilities COVID-19 Advisory Group – Meeting Minutes

APRIL 14, 2021
3:00PM-4:00PM

Review and approval of meeting minutes:

- Reviewed meeting minutes from last meeting – Approved and Seconded.

Safe Start Plan Update:

Workgroup meetings are happening

Patricia Hunter working with Amber Leaders to get perspective from Governor – there is no meeting set up yet but Patricia is sending a Save the Date. Amy A. has the meeting minutes and info from all of the workgroup meetings to help inform this meeting.

Question: CDC changed recommendations a little related to protective equipment. We are not sure what to advise facilities?

Response: In high COVID prevalence areas, continue as before. In low COVID prevalence areas, you may continue with face shields and masks.

Some states have come up with specific guidance around this. State of OR for example.

Last week DOH said anything above 25 cases per 100,000 should continue with eye protection. It's currently recommended to keep everything as is.

We should think about next steps for this and transparency as some people may want to reduce face shields, etc and we should prepare for this.

DOH has a system in place to provide updates to this type of guidance.

ACTION ITEM: Check in with Larissa on this and how we prepare to update.

ACTION ITEM: Check in on visitation visual document

Question: How is visitation going?

Some facilities are handing out a code of conduct to visitors as they screen them at check in so they are aware of how they should conduct themselves within the facility.

Lots of calls from AFH providers regarding guidance because it's so long and has been challenging for them. Many are hesitant to start visitation because of this and it takes them a lot of time to coordinate and schedule visits.

Anything the state can do to provide guidance. And have an understanding that they don't have time to create policies and documents so anything the state can do to help develop those is appreciated.

ALF/NF: Some families don't want to pre-schedule visits – they just want to show up so facilities have had to educate around that.

SL: Not a lot of communications from providers on visitation. There have been questions about how to adapt the screening tool as state surveyors/investigators don't have to go through the screening process.

Dining and Activities:

There are still problems with dining and activities in facilities. In a 100% resident vaccinated facility, residents still aren't able to dine together. It doesn't make sense.

They can go out in the community together and sit together and eat but when they come back to the facility, they have to be apart.

This is having a negative impact on quality of life. How long will this go on? We need to start thinking about going back to some sense of normalcy.

The lack of movement on this is frustrating.

The Safe Start workgroup has concerns about this and providers are also bringing it forward.

This can be part of the meeting Patricia is organizing with the Governor's office.

There is a critical misunderstanding with the CDC/CMS rules related to community spread. But it's putting up barriers to implementation.

We want to see the Safe Start adhere to CDC/CMS guidelines and the call with the Governor's office is an opportunity to understand and address this.

We agreed to hold off on dining and activities because we understood CDC/CMS was going to release new guidance.

AFH: Dining is obviously different in the AFHs. These are homes with 6-8 people. They are struggling to utilize the same level of PPE in these homes as well. In some cases, it's just wasteful. When the home is 100% vaccinated, and they are not doing personal care (watching tv, dining, etc).

SL: This is the same frustration as the AFHs for the employees. SL requests that clients wear masks but it is a request, not a requirement. SL is also currently assessing glove use to determine if they can only wear it during personal care, cleaning, etc and not all the time.

Please share any best practices as they are developed.

Vaccination:

J&J on hold right now. This is definitely impacting the hospital vaccination program.

Joanne Parris from DOH: Suspended J&J from hospital program. Switched to other vaccination supplies. Same with community clinics.

The supply is enough to meet the current needs and we order weekly.
We anticipate we will hear more about J&J by the end of the week.

Question: Do you know if Omnicare and PharMerica have started their programs in WA?
Omnicare said they'll be out next week so they should be scheduling. They have to pivot from any use of the J&J vaccine.

Omnicare is not able to provide administration of the vaccine in facilities they do not have contracts with.

Surveys for vaccine support have slowed down.

DOH can't shift vaccine to Omnicare or PharMerica but can help with get their own shipments.

Symptoms of J&J can occur within 2 weeks of vaccination. Out of all doses administered only 6 cases of these severe adverse impacts have been reported but they were so significant that they are pausing to do further evaluation.

They are also trying to make sure they are identifying people with side effects and treating them appropriately.

Two hospitals in Eastern WA have decided to pause due to the J&J issue. UW is transitioning to use Pfizer and Moderna. Franciscan is also changing vaccines.

Moderna is more readily available.

Question: The 6 people that developed illness were women between 18 and 48 with no conditions that could tie them to an adverse reaction?

Yes, there are similarities to the European vaccine and they had a broader group of cases with these side effects.

There is a COVID call tomorrow.

ACIP is not ready to make a decision so they are pausing.

Question: How many AFHs have participated in any kind of vaccination program? There was information released in a stakeholder meeting that an AFH in King Co was "wiped out" in February? Is there survey or testing that was done? We heard this was from a variant. And is that information being shared with provider/resident/family?

It would be nice to talk about this at a future meeting.

Larissa shared data at the last meeting that spoke to this. Patricia will reach out to get the slide deck from her.

Agenda for next meeting:

Follow up on today's agenda items.
Hospital vaccination program updates
Case trends and vaccination updates
Safe Start Plans