



FOCUS POINT NEWSLETTER -- January 12, 2020



Public Health Emergency Renewed to April 2021

Alex M. Azar II, Secretary of Health and Human Services renewed the public health emergency to April 2021. This renewal means:

- [Section 1135 National, Blanket Waiver](#) remains in place. This waiver includes the telehealth and staffing waivers.
- [Section 1812\(f\) Waiver](#) also remains in place. This covers the waiver of the 3-Day Stay requirement and the waiver of the Spell of Illness.

Virginia VDH and OLC Updates

The Office of Licensure and Certification has made the following recent announcements:

- VDH has contracted with **Healthcare Management Solutions** to assist OLC with complaint surveys and “catching up on overdue” **routine nursing home recertification surveys**.

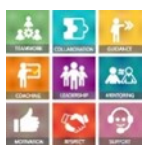
According to the OLC, Healthcare Management Solutions is utilized by CMS, and has the same training as OLC/CMS surveyors. The surveys conducted by Health Management Solutions will be conducted independently of the OLC surveyors.



CHC Note: With the pending re-start of certification surveys [i.e., standard/annual surveys], it is critical that the organization take a look to identify and correct any gaps in systems or processes that may have occurred since your last certification survey. This would be a good time to request and / or schedule a remote review [i.e., focused or comprehensive mock] to assist you in identifying opportunities for improvement, reduction in risks, and to focus on corrective and improvement action plans. Please contact Mary, mary@chileshealthcare.com for additional information.

- **Kourtney Hales-Richards, MBA, LNHA, LPN** has been selected as **Long-Term Care Division Director** at Virginia Department of Health - Office of Licensure & Certification. Kourtney Hales-Richards, (804) 367-2101, kourtney.hales-richards@vdh.virginia.gov. We look forward to continuing our positive and collaborative relationship with OLC and welcome Mr. Hales-Richards to his new role.
- **Closing a Healthcare Facility to New Admissions or Readmissions during the COVID-19 Pandemic: VDH Interim Guidance for Local Health Departments and Long-Term Care Facilities – Update 1/8/2021 Full Release [here](#)**
 In response to an outbreak, closure of facilities to new admissions may be recommended as a standard part of Virginia Department of Health (VDH) disease control measures. However, any decision to close and/or accept new admissions or readmissions must be based on a risk assessment and tailored to the situation. The decision to close a facility to new admissions should be made in consultation with the local health department. The following criteria should be met when making a decision on accepting new admissions or readmissions:
 - The number of COVID-19 cases identified in the facility (staff and residents) is decreasing.
 - No evidence of widespread transmission of COVID-19 in the facility.
 - Facility is compliant with best practices for infection prevention and control.
 - Enough space for cohorting positive versus negative residents, and an observational unit for new admissions is available.
 - Adequate staffing, PPE, and other supplies.
 - The facility has a plan to manage new admissions and readmissions.

While limited or temporary closure of a long-term care facility (LTCF) to new admissions may be needed when COVID-19 cases are identified, closing to new admissions for two full incubation periods (28 days) is not currently recommended. Due to surges in COVID-19 cases, there is a need to be able to move patients through the continuum of care, including from acute care into post-acute care facilities. Therefore, there is a need to be flexible and only close LTCFs for a limited number of days to ensure an acute outbreak is under control and the facility has the resources needed to safely care for residents. Local health departments and health care facilities will need to balance the important goal of disease prevention and control with the importance of maintaining health care bed capacity during a time of COVID-19 surge. Please note that CMS has not instructed nursing homes/skilled nursing facilities to close to new admissions as part of an outbreak response. During the COVID-19 pandemic, CMS has relaxed some policies to better allow for the transfer of patients. Additional information can be found on the CMS website and COVID-19 Emergency Declaration Blanket Waivers for Health Care Providers .



CHC Resources - **NEW JANUARY, 2021**

- **Sample Care Plan for COVID 19 Resident Vaccination Acceptance or Refusal**; this is appropriate and be utilized for either nursing facility or assisted living facility plans of care. Please contact Mary at mary@chileshealthcare.com for your **free** sample.
- **Care Planning – Keep it Real** – a 1-hour power point Zoom presentation for the interdisciplinary team that discusses strategies for keeping the resident care plan person-centered, responsive to identified opportunities, resident / representative preferences and choices and updated timely. This presentation is designed to facilitate participant engagement and is provided with a handout and post- est. Please contact Mary or your CHC representative for additional information.

Super Productive Leaders

Have you ever met one of those leaders that get so much accomplished that you wonder what they do differently to achieve their efficiency and productivity? In a recent interview among a number of these accomplished leaders there were four tips that surfaced:

1. Batch your meetings, calls, emails, and virtual events into scheduled slots in your day. Productivity increases when your schedule is opened to get work accomplished. Consider creating rules around your own schedule. If you are most alert in the mornings, try to schedule your most demanding tasks and meetings in the first part of your day, and leave the second half of your day to some quiet work.
2. Avoid using the mouse and instead use keyboard shortcuts to save time and brain distractions.
3. Purposely alter your way to better behavior. Consider what habits you want to change and think about how you can alter your environment to influence those behaviors. Determine what helps you work more focused and to be more productive.
4. Identify what makes you more efficient. Read your written work out loud to make sure what you are trying to relay is communicated as it was meant to be. Being productive is not about doing more, but about doing things in an efficient manner.

