



3/31/2020

Colorado's post-acute/ long-term care (PA/LTC) facilities are healthcare facilities serving as permanent residences for Colorado's frailest older adults, the very population most susceptible to fatal outcomes from COVID-19. For the safety of all involved, we request that PA/LTC facilities must never be compelled by policy to indiscriminately admit COVID-19 positive patients.

#### Rationale

- Along with CHCA (Colorado Health Care Association & Center for Assisted Living) and Leading Age Colorado, we recognize that admitting patients with COVID-19 into PA/LTC sites such as skilled nursing (SNF) and assisted living facilities (ALF) jeopardizes the safety of the current residents. In the King County Washington COVID-19 outbreak, the fatality rate was 36% among geriatric nursing home residents, which is unacceptably high. Current residents have been protected from unnecessary exposure to coronavirus since Colorado's Public Health Order 20-20 (3/12/20) restricting visitors to care facilities.
- Along with AMDA The Society for Post-acute and Long-term Care Medicine, we recognize that states requiring SNFs to admit patients discharged from hospitals, regardless of the risk of COVID-19, are creating disastrous solutions to the COVID-19 surge. In the King County Washington COVID-19 outbreak, the hospitalization rate was 57%. Knowingly introducing one patient with COVID-19 into a SNF will cause dozens more to be admitted back to the hospital, contributing even more to the surge.
- Reference: *State Advisories re: Hospital Discharges and Admissions to Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Communities.*

#### Recommendations for Colorado

- Avoid any policies or public health directives that compel PA/LTC facilities to accept patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19.
- Transfer of hospitalized patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 to PA/LTC facilities should only occur if the accepting facilities are adequately equipped to care for those patients.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, sites for care besides PA/LTC should be considered for patients after hospital discharge. Alternate sites include: hospital transitional care units, step-down units, and specialized COVID-positive nursing facilities. Decisions to transfer hospitalized patients to a nursing home are not the sole directives of the hospital, but, rather, require collaboration with accepting facilities.

CMDA The Colorado Society for Post-acute and Long-term Care, is a statewide organization that supports over 700 medical directors, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, physicians and other healthcare professionals providing care in PA/LTC.

Sincerely,

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