



Long-Term Care Plan for Pennsylvania

RESIDENT CARE-FOCUSED INITIATIVES

Emergency Funding

Since the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed in Pennsylvania, operating costs for long-term care providers have increased by nearly 400%. In addition to offering higher compensation and 'hazard pay' for frontline staff, costs of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other critical supplies have skyrocketed. PHCA has requested \$290 million in emergency funding for providers, as well as a 3% Medicaid rate increase, to ensure stability for the next 120 days, and to enable providers to continue caring for our most vulnerable population: our seniors.

Priority Testing

One of the most challenging realities of fighting COVID-19 is its ability to affect everyone from every demographic differently. Workers and residents may have COVID-19 but may be totally asymptomatic; however, they can still spread the virus. The only way to truly mitigate the spread is to begin broad-based testing. PHCA has requested priority testing for long-term care residents and staff. If long-term care is the epicenter of the virus, let's send our resources where they're needed most.

Priority Personal Protective Equipment

Just as long-term care workers and residents must receive priority testing, we must also ensure providers and workers on the front lines of the battle against COVID-19 are not also facing an inadequate supply of PPE. Masks, gowns, gloves and goggles must be prioritized for long-term care workers, as we've learned that the proper equipment can mitigate the spread of the virus.

Appoint a Long-Term Care Ambassador

To truly combat COVID-19, long-term care providers need help from state government, including the Wolf Administration, the Department of Health and the Department of Human Services. PHCA has requested a Long-Term Care Ambassador, appointed by Governor Wolf, to lead the fight against COVID-19 and work **in tandem** with providers to remove barriers and ensure success.

PROVIDER-FOCUSED INITIATIVES

Grant Medical Liability Protections

COVID-19 has altered the delivery of healthcare services in Pennsylvania. Although necessary, the constant evolution of guidance and recommendations from CMS, the CDC, and the Pennsylvania Department of Health has raised concern about the potential liability of our providers and the workers caring for residents. Pennsylvania must join our neighboring states, including New York and New Jersey, in guaranteeing civil immunity to health care professionals. Staff are putting themselves at risk every single day to make the best care decisions for their residents - they should not be worried about the threat of lawsuits.

Establish a Centralized Reporting Database

Currently, providers must report COVID-19 information, including positive cases, supplies and staffing, to various departments and databases, including the Department of Health, the local health care coalition, the state Knowledge Center and the federal CDC. The first priority of every provider should be ensuring the delivery of high quality care, not spending countless hours checking inventory and reporting. We request the state develop one single database in which all information can be reported and disseminated, which will save time and improve the flow of information.