

# Helping Long-Term Care Facilities Prevent and Address COVID-19

Long-term care (LTC) facility residents face an elevated risk due to advanced age and underlying medical conditions. Congregate care residents are also at high risk due to close proximity with others.

Outreach/Education	Investigations
<p>Since March 4, MDH has held weekly calls with long-term care facilities and provider organizations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Calls relay up-to-date information about the outbreak and guidance from MDH or CDC.</li> <li>▪ Most recent call had ~1,500 participants.</li> </ul>	<p>Upon notification of confirmed COVID-19 in a LTC setting, MDH initiates an investigation, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Initial calls with facility administrators and clinical staff and MDH surveillance.</li> <li>▪ Infection prevention.</li> <li>▪ Healthcare worker exposure workgroups.</li> <li>▪ Case interview and contact tracing to identify exposed residents and healthcare staff.</li> </ul>
Response Guidance	Support
<p>MDH has developed guidelines for resident, healthcare personnel, staff contact tracing and exposure risk assessment. Measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Isolation or cohorting of ill residents and quarantine for exposed residents.</li> <li>▪ Review precautions and types of personal protective equipment that is needed.</li> <li>▪ Visitor restrictions and canceled activities.</li> <li>▪ Disinfection and cleaning.</li> <li>▪ Offer a virtual facility infection control assessment by infection prevention team.</li> <li>▪ Provide monitoring tools for health care workers (to look for COVID-19 symptoms).</li> </ul>	<p>Each facility that has an outbreak is assigned an MDH case manager that works with them daily to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Help merge MDH guidance with facility requirements and needs.</li> <li>▪ Reach out to MDH and/or SEOC depending on problems/needs.</li> <li>▪ Assist facilities with safe transfer of patients with COVID-19 to their facility, or the transfer of a resident from a facility with an ongoing COVID-19 outbreak to a facility without an outbreak.</li> <li>▪ Ensure the facilities have the tools and resources they need to safely care for residents.</li> </ul>

MDH and the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) address emergent issues with LTC facilities in a two-pronged approach: current response and long term planning response. Actions include:

1. Offering potential resources (such as staffing) that can address critical issues facing a facility.
2. Building out a crisis team to immediately respond to facilities at risk of being overwhelmed.
3. Providing an SEOC information line to help LTC workers with resources specific to their needs.
4. Determining who can help and where with fast-moving outbreaks in LTC facilities.
5. Refining processes based on the ongoing situation and better understanding of needs.
6. Reviewing data sets to identify high-risk facilities with past infection control issues. Determine whether they need assistance to implement MDH guidance.