

IHANS Notification for Nursing Home and Adult Care Facilities

Further Information Regarding Holiday Guidance

November 25, 2020

The purpose of this communication is to provide further information regarding implementation of the Department's Holiday Guidance for Adult Care Facilities and Nursing Homes, issued on November 24, 2020. As stated in the guidance, the Department and CMS recommend against residents leaving facilities for gatherings. Facilities should encourage innovative and alternative ways to celebrate the holidays. Facilities must educate both residents and families about the risks of the resident leaving the facility in regard to potential COVID-19 transmission, requirements that must be met for a resident to return, visitation alternatives, and obtain an attestation from the resident and the individual taking the resident out of the facility their understanding of these requirements. Facilities must ensure families are aware that, pursuant to this guidance and Executive Order 202.77, the resident will not be permitted to return until they present a negative COVID-19 diagnostic test result from a test taken within the preceding 24 hours.

Facilities should make families aware of local options for COVID-19 testing. Facilities may use their existing point of care rapid testing supplies (e.g. BinaxNOW, AbbotIDNOW) to test residents who have not been tested prior to their re-entry to the facility. Facilities with limited supplies should notify the Department at Covid19rapidtest@health.ny.gov and the Department will attempt to provide supplies to the facility. Facilities using other antigen tests should be aware that only BinaxNOW supplies are available to send to facilities at this time.

Facilities that are not currently providing point of care rapid testing on site or do not have a Limited Service Laboratory (LSL) registration, are responsible for educating the resident and their family of the need for the resident to present a verified negative test result performed within the last 24 hours prior to the resident's return to the facility, and the facility's inability to perform such test.

Families and facilities should coordinate arrangements for residents who do not have a negative test result from the preceding 24 hours upon the resident's return. Any family or friend attempting to return a resident with a positive result must find other appropriate accommodations to properly isolate the resident. Any family or friend attempting to return an untested resident, where the facility is not able to test the resident and obtain a negative result prior to re-entry, must take the resident to another appropriate setting.

Facilities should prepare residents who choose to leave the facility for the possibility that they may not be able to return immediately and ensure they take several days' worth of any necessary medications and supplies with them. Facilities who cannot care for a resident are always prohibited from accepting a resident pursuant to 10 NYCRR 415.26, and if they are unable to provide such care must call the Department at 1-866-881-2809.

Questions should be directed to:

Nursing Home Assistance and Coordination Center - at 1-833-978-2581

Or covidnursinghomeinfo@health.ny.gov 7-days a week, 8am – 5pm

* November 25 – 27, the Nursing Home BML will be available until 11pm*