

# Resources for Long-term Care Facilities Preparing for 2023-2024 Respiratory Season

## Toolkit

[CDC: Viral Respiratory Pathogens Toolkit for Nursing Homes \(www.cdc.gov/longtermcare/prevention/viral-respiratory-toolkit.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/longtermcare/prevention/viral-respiratory-toolkit.html)

## Vaccine

There are now effective vaccines that can prevent severe illness for three respiratory diseases (influenza, COVID-19, and RSV) which can be especially serious in nursing home residents.

## Logistics

- All vaccines, including COVID-19, are now purchased through the private market.
- Options for providing onsite vaccination:
  - Secure vaccine through a long-term care (LTC) pharmacy, vaccine distributor or manufacturer, an affiliated healthcare system, or a local pharmacy.
  - For government entities, MMCAP Infuse, a national cooperative group purchasing organization, is an option to purchase vaccines. Any government owned LTCF can learn more and apply at [MMCAP Infuse \(infuse-mn.gov/about/index.jsp\)](https://mmcap-infuse.mn.gov/about/index.jsp).
  - Administer vaccine by utilizing LTCF licensed nursing staff or contract for these services.
  - Check if programs that residents attend offer on-site vaccination (e.g., day programs, senior center visits, congregate nutrition programs).
  - Contact your local public health department to identify resources in your community to assist with securing vaccine and providing vaccination.
  - Reach out to an association you are a member of to assess other available resources (e.g., Care Providers of Minnesota, LeadingAge Minnesota, etc.).
- Review [Immunize.org: Vaccinating Adults: A Step-by-Step Guide \(www.immunize.org/guide\)](https://www.immunize.org/guide) to enhance your onsite vaccination services or if planning on initiating these services at your facility.
- Ensure proper storage and handling of vaccines by following best practices as reflected in [CDC: Vaccine Storage and Handling Toolkit \(www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/storage/toolkit/index.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/storage/toolkit/index.html).

## Education and clinical information

- Current vaccine recommendations: [ACIP Vaccine Recommendations and Guidelines \(www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/index.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/index.html).
- CDC resources:
  - [COVID-19 Vaccination Clinical & Professional Resources \(www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/index.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/index.html)
  - [Influenza Vaccination: Information for Healthcare Professionals \(www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/flu/hcp/index.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/flu/hcp/index.html)
  - RSV vaccination job aid for [Healthcare Providers: RSV Vaccination for Adults 60 Years of Age and Over \(www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/rsv/hcp/older-adults.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/rsv/hcp/older-adults.html)
  - [Shared Clinical Decision-Making: RSV Vaccination for Adults 60 Years and Older \(www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/rsv/downloads/provider-job-aid-for-older-adults-508.pdf\)](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/rsv/downloads/provider-job-aid-for-older-adults-508.pdf)
- Provide a current [Vaccine Information Statements \(VIS\) \(www.immunize.org/vis\)](https://www.immunize.org/vis) before each vaccine dose, as required by federal law. Offer a VIS in the patient's preferred language. Immunize.org offers VISs in multiple languages.
- Encourage coadministration of vaccines to avoid missing an opportunity to vaccinate.
- Refer to [COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Guide \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/vaccine/provider.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/vaccine/provider.html) and [2023-24 Minnesota Fall Flu Guide \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/flu/hcp/vaccine/fluguide.pdf\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/flu/hcp/vaccine/fluguide.pdf).

## Staff vaccination

- Encourage staff to discuss vaccination with their primary health care provider or visit [Where to Get Vaccinated \(www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/vaxfinder.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/vaxfinder.html) and [Vaccines.gov \(www.vaccines.gov\)](https://www.vaccines.gov) (web content available in English and Spanish) to find COVID-19 or influenza vaccines near you.
- Staff can visit [Find My Immunization Record \(www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/miic/records.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/miic/records.html) for assistance in accessing their immunization record (instructions in multiple languages).

## Billing

- Review Medicare Billing Guidance on [AHCA/NCAL: #GetVaccinated \(www.ahcancal.org/Quality/Pages/GetVaccinated.aspx\)](https://www.ahcancal.org/Quality/Pages/GetVaccinated.aspx).
- For staff without health insurance or whose insurance does not cover all vaccine costs, refer to [Vaccination Clinics Serving Uninsured and Underinsured Adults \(www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/uuavsearch.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/uuavsearch.html) and for COVID-19 vaccine only, refer to CDC'S Bridge Access Program for resources.

## Testing

Detailed testing recommendations for LTC are available at: [CDC Testing and Management Considerations for Nursing Home Residents with Acute Respiratory Illness Symptoms when SARS-CoV-2 and Influenza Viruses are Co-Circulating \(www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/diagnosis/testing-management-considerations-nursinghomes.htm\)](https://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/diagnosis/testing-management-considerations-nursinghomes.htm).

Both nursing homes and assisted-living facilities are able to order free COVID-19 test kits from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services by sending an email to: [tdx@hhs.gov](mailto:tdx@hhs.gov). You will need to include the following information with your request:

- A copy of your facilities current CLIA waiver
- The name and address of your facility
- The name e-mail and phone number of your facility POC
- The number of employees in your facility
- The number of tests per week you require

## Treatment

Detailed prescribing information is available at: [Therapeutic Options for COVID-19 Patients \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/therapeutic.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/therapeutic.html).

How to access treatment for your residents:

- Both oral antivirals (Paxlovid and molnupiravir) are distributed to pharmacies by the federal government at no cost and are widely available through long-term care and community pharmacies.
  - Facilities should check availability of oral antivirals with their usual pharmacy partners or go to the [Administration for Strategic Preparedness & Response COVID-19 Therapeutics Locator \(covid-19-therapeutics-locator-dhhs.hub.arcgis.com\)](https://covid-19-therapeutics-locator-dhhs.hub.arcgis.com) to find participating pharmacies.
- Minnesota has a free telehealth test to treat program to provide clinical consultations for oral antiviral prescriptions. Learn more at [COVID-19 Telehealth Program \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/telehealth.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/telehealth.html).
- Remdesivir (administered IV) is available commercially and is not being distributed by the federal government.
  - Due to logistical constraints, outpatient remdesivir is not widely available. Locations offering outpatient remdesivir have been added to the [Administration for Strategic Preparedness & Response COVID-19 Therapeutics Locator \(covid-19-therapeutics-locator-dhhs.hub.arcgis.com\)](https://covid-19-therapeutics-locator-dhhs.hub.arcgis.com) but this list is incomplete.
  - Facilities should check with their nearest hospital or infusion center to see whether outpatient remdesivir treatment is available for patients that are not clinically eligible for Paxlovid.

## Reporting

Reporting respiratory pathogens such as COVID-19, influenza, RSV is not only required by Minnesota law but also helps us understand the burden of these diseases in the vulnerable LTC population. The data gathered through reporting informs MDH's LTC guidance for infection prevention and control, testing, and treatment. Visit [Reportable Disease Rule \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/reportable/rule/index.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/reportable/rule/index.html).

### NHSN reporting resources for nursing homes:

- [CDC: LTCF COVID-19/Respiratory Pathogens Module \(www.cdc.gov/nhsn/ltc/covid19/index.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/ltc/covid19/index.html)
- [CDC: COVID-19/Respiratory Pathogens Vaccination \(www.cdc.gov/nhsn/ltc/weekly-covid-vac/index.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/ltc/weekly-covid-vac/index.html)

## Infection control resources

### Transmission-based precautions

- Type and Duration of Precautions: [CDC: Type and Duration of Precautions Recommended for Selected Infections and Conditions \(www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/isolation/appendix/type-duration-precautions.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/isolation/appendix/type-duration-precautions.html)
- Precautions based on clinical syndromes or pending confirmation of diagnosis: [CDC: Clinical Syndromes or Conditions Warranting Empiric Transmission-Based Precautions in Addition to Standard Precautions \(www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/isolation/appendix/transmission-precautions.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/isolation/appendix/transmission-precautions.html)
- Donning and Doffing PPE: [CDC: Example of Safe Donning and Removal of Personal Protective Equipment \(www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/isolation/appendix/ppe.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/isolation/appendix/ppe.html)

### Masks

- [National Library of Medicine: CDC Science Brief: Community Use of Masks to Control the Spread of SARS-CoV-2 \(www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK570440\)](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK570440)

### Understanding risk

- [CDC: Understanding Risk \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/understanding-risk.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/understanding-risk.html)
- [CDC: Understanding Exposure Risks \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/risks-exposure.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/risks-exposure.html)

- [CDC: Factors That Affect Your Risk of Getting Very Sick from COVID-19  
\(\[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/risks-getting-very-sick.html\]\(https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/risks-getting-very-sick.html\)\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/risks-getting-very-sick.html)

## Other resources

- [CDC: Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Pandemic  
\(\[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html\]\(https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html\)\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html)
- [Employee Illness Tracking Tool  
\(\[www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/illtracktool.xlsx\]\(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/illtracktool.xlsx\)\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/illtracktool.xlsx)
- [COVID-19 Source Control \(Masking\), PPE, and Testing Grid  
\(\[www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/ppegrid.pdf\]\(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/ppegrid.pdf\)\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/ppegrid.pdf)
- [CDC: Infection Control Actions for Respiratory Viruses  
\(\[www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/projectfirstline/healthcare/respiratory-virus-prevention.html\]\(https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/projectfirstline/healthcare/respiratory-virus-prevention.html\)\)](https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/projectfirstline/healthcare/respiratory-virus-prevention.html)

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