



County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

POST OFFICE BOX 962, 1080 Emeline Ave., SANTA CRUZ, CA 95061-0962
TELEPHONE: (831) 454-4000 FAX: (831) 454-4488 TDD: Call 711

Public Health Division

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

To: Santa Cruz County Long-Term Care, Skilled Nursing Facilities and Hospitals

From: Gail Newel, MD, MPH, County Health Officer

Subject: COVID-19 Screening and Testing for New Admissions

Date: March 8, 2021

Situational Update: Santa Cruz County continues to experience **outbreaks** in most of our **Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF), assisted living/memory care, congregate living facilities and hospitals**. Residents being admitted to a congregate setting from acute care, transitional care, or another congregate setting are at particularly high risk for contracting COVID. Despite most residents of congregate settings having been vaccinated with one or two doses, there is still the need for vigilant monitoring upon admission. If the patient has not been vaccinated, vaccination should be offered upon admission. New admits should be admitted to a welcome unit and monitored for 14 days with at least daily screening/temperature checks (every shift recommended). Full PPE should be worn by staff when providing direct patient care to a new admit. New admits should, when possible, have a private room.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to conducting symptom check at every shift:

- **Santa Cruz County Communicable Disease Unit (CDU) recommends daily testing of new admits with rapid point of care (POC) tests (if available) throughout the 14-day quarantine period.**
- **If rapid tests are not available, CDU recommends increased testing frequency with PCR, such as Day 1, Day 7, Day 14.**

SNFs may consider acute care hospital days as part of the quarantine observation period for new admissions as long as the following criteria are met:

- SNF is in regular communication with their local health department (LHD) and/or the hospital infection preventionist and occupational health program, and there is no suspected or confirmed COVID-19 transmission among patients or staff at the hospital.
- SNF has verified (via the LHD or hospital) that the hospital is implementing a process for screening new admissions and monitoring patients for hospital-onset COVID-19, and has designated COVID-19 unit(s) with dedicated staff and minimal cross-over.

References:

- Association of Bay Area Health Officers Press Release – [COVID-19 Vaccination of Seniors and Patients Being Discharged to Long-Term Care Facilities](#)
- [AFL 20-25.2](#) Preparing for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in California Skilled Nursing Facilities
- [AFL 20-33](#) Interim Guidance for Transfer of Residents with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)
- [AFL 20-53.3](#) Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Mitigation Plan Recommendations for Testing of Health Care Personnel (HCP) and Residents at Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF)
- [AFL 20-74](#) Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Recommendations for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Resident Placement/Movement, and Staffing in Skilled Nursing Facilities
- [Preparing for COVID-19 in CA SNFs](#)
- [Assessment of CA SNFs to Receive Patients with Confirmed COVID-19 Infection](#)
- Detection and Management of COVID-19 Cases in SNFs:
- [Detection and Management of COVID-19 Cases in Congregate Living Facilities](#)
- [Infection Control Guidance for Congregate Living Facilities with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Cases](#)

For more provider guidance, please visit our Santa Cruz County [COVID 19 Provider Guidance Website](#)



Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.