



UPDATE

A publication of the Arizona Health Care Association

AHCA UPDATE | January 5, 2021

Welcome to the newest AHCA Members!



Assured Partners Senior Living Risk Solutions

Assured Partners' experienced Senior Living team provides the technical expertise necessary to maneuver the dynamic world of liability exposures, human resource responsibilities, claims settlement, workers' compensation and regulatory actions. Their nationwide network includes in-house services such as legal consultation, clinical risk management, third party claims handling and due diligence. The result is an agile, well-positioned insurance firm that responds with creative products and services, allowing you to focus on what's most important—caring for your residents.

Contact:
Lionel McCray, Vice President,
CPCU, ARM, MBA

480-868-0567
lionel.mccray@assuredpartners.com

ReMax Ascend Realty (Commercial)



For over 30 years, Carey Erwin has specialized in representing clients in the sale of their skilled nursing facilities, memory care, assisted living, and independent retirement facilities. For several years, Carey held the position of Director of Acquisitions and Development for Sun Healthcare Group, a former NYSE company. He has been associated with several long term care associations in the past and is interested in continuing to understand the operational challenges his clients face—including nursing regulatory issues, reimbursement challenges, or staffing shortages—in order to more effectively represent them.

Contact:
Carey Erwin, Senior Associate

480-670-4206
cwin@me.com



RetirementHomeTV

Dedicated exclusively to senior living communities, RetirementHomeTV (RHTV) provides an alternative to Cable tv and internet throughout the continental United States. RHTV provides customized channel line-ups with free in-house Community Channels without the need for tv set-top boxes at a more attractive rate than cable. By bundling superior tv solutions with robust internet, RHTV is dedicated to resident satisfaction and 24/7/365 live support for the communities that they serve.

Contact:
Kurt Schlabach, President, CEO
877-477-3474
kurt@retirementhometv.com



Business Affiliate Member Spotlight



Sonora Quest Laboratories is the market share leader in diagnostic laboratory testing in Arizona serving more than 26,000 patients every day. As part of their mission to drive customer value across the continuum of care, Sonora Quest is proud to provide mobile phlebotomy and specimen collection services to 120 facilities throughout the state, and is the only commercial laboratory to directly provide these services in Arizona. In 2021, they will expand business and home collection services to include weekend appointments, allowing higher risk patients (immunocompromised, fall risk, physical limitations, special needs, etc.) to have even greater access to safe and convenient testing.

Contact: Carrie Marshall,
Marketing and Communication Specialist
602-685-5547
carrie.marshall@sonoraquest.com

NATIONAL NEWS

Stimulus Package Detail

Congress passed and the President signed a [\\$900 billion stimulus package](#) that is a mixed bag for long term care. There is one disappointment, but there are some favorable provisions that will help us as we enter 2021. The disappointment is that the bill added only a miniscule \$3 billion to the Provider Relief Fund (PRF). The rationale appears to be that there is still \$20 billion left in it from prior stimulus bills and that the new Congress will look at adding additional dollars in early 2021. Nevertheless, it is a disappointment.

On the positive side, the bill does the following:

1. It extends the sequester relief for three more months. This keeps our Medicare rates 2% higher until the end of March of 2021.
2. It provides a much broader definition of revenue and expenses for purposes of attesting for Provider Relief Funds. This is a major relief for many operators.
3. It prevents some Part B Medicare cuts that otherwise would have taken place.
4. It allows providers to deduct the expenses that PPP loans paid for, even if the SBA forgives the PPP loan. This is a major tax advantage.
5. It allows HUD to offer some more favorable conditions on existing HUD loans.

A longer summary of the bill is available [here](#). We will continue to advocate for additional funds so that you can continue to provide high quality care.



Some PRF Phase 3 Applications Deemed Ineligible

AHCA/NCAL learned that about 5,000 Phase 3 Provider Relief Fund (PRF) applications were *accidentally* deemed ineligible to apply by HHS, and that they will be sending out emails to those applicants in the coming days inviting them to re-apply for Phase 3 by January 6, 2021. This is some relatively good news in that we have been hearing from members whose TINs were rejected and we could not determine the reason. Hopefully, this is the cause for those determinations and the applications will be allowed to go through now.

VACCINE UPDATE

COVID-19 Vaccine Update

Vaccine distribution has begun in SNFs in Arizona starting the week of December 28. Several facilities held their vaccination clinics and we joined them to see how it went. Check them out, but continue reading for further vaccine and post-vaccine updates.



Thank you to Wellsprings Therapy Center of Gilbert and The Palazzo for allowing us to join them for their vaccination clinics with CVS and Walgreens! Both Charles Seal-Villafranca and Jeffreys Barrett are shown getting their vaccines.



For those SNFs registered with the Pharmacy Partnership, you should've received outreach from both CVS and WAG. If not, here are some important email and website addresses for you. ALs may start to receive outreach in the next week.

- **CVS website:** www.omnicare.com/covid-19-vaccine-resource. Reach out to them at covidvaccineclinicsltcf@cvshealth.com if you haven't received outreach.
- **Walgreens website:** www.walgreens.com/covidvaccine. Reach out to them at immunizeltc@walgreens.com if you haven't received outreach.

Also, the CDC has provided this toolkit with information and resources to help build vaccine confidence among healthcare personnel (HCP) and residents - [Long-Term Care Facility Toolkit: Preparing for COVID-19 Vaccination at Your Facility](#).

The newest vaccine is the [Moderna version](#), which received emergency authorization usage (EAU). In addition to this Moderna EUA [fact sheet](#), AHCA/NCAL has developed numerous resources (see below) to help you execute these clinics and communicate with staff and residents about the importance of getting this vaccine. As part of the AHCA/NCAL [#GetVaccinated](#) campaign, you have access to media resources, talking points for staff and residents, social media content, bilingual letters for obtaining consent, graphics to help develop collateral such as buttons and stickers, and so much more. Please [view the campaign](#) and utilize these resources. In addition, AHCA/NCAL hosted a COVID-19 vaccine office last week. Recordings are focused on preparing for and promoting high vaccination rates in your building and are available [here](#). (Thanks to AHCA/NCAL for these resources.)

It is very important providers accurately estimate the number of people to be vaccinated at this time to avoid any waste. If there are any changes to that estimate communicate this to your matched pharmacy partner as soon as possible. Recommendations:

- Timely surveys (within 2-3 days of the clinic) of staff and residents to determine how many plan to take the vaccine.
- Frequent and regular communication on vaccine benefits and safety up until the clinic date.
 - For ideas, resources and collateral, visit [AHCA/NCAL's #GetVaccinated website](#)
 - Also check out [CDC's Long-Term Care Facility Toolkit: Preparing for COVID-19](#)

Vaccination at Your Facility

- Materials (handouts, posters, lawn signs, etc.) on the day of the clinic emphasizing the importance of vaccination.
 - AHCA/NCAL [Infection Control Post-Vaccine](#)
 - AHCA/NCAL [Facts and Myths One-Pager](#)
 - [CDC COVID-19 Vaccine Posters and Stickers](#)
- Celebratory items on the day of the vaccine to encourage staff to get vaccinated.
 - AHCA/NCAL [Social Media Toolkit](#)
 - AHCA/NCAL Graphics
 - [#GetVaccinated](#)
 - [#GotVaccinated](#)
 - [CDC COVID-19 Vaccine Posters and Stickers](#)

To address concerns over staff calling out after the vaccine, please review the AHCA/NCAL [staffing considerations guidance](#).

All Long Term Care Healthcare Workers are Eligible for the COVID-19 Vaccine

As healthcare workers, all long term care professionals are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine. You can either get vaccinated at the facility where you work or any of one of the many PODs in Maricopa County. In other words, you do not need to wait for the pharmacy program to come to your facility. If you are in Maricopa County follow this link for the pre-screen:

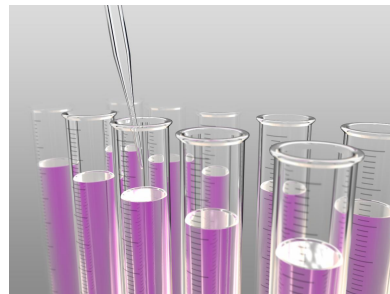
<https://gis.maricopa.gov/covid19/vaccine/prescreen>. Other counties will post their guidance as it becomes available. Until then, check out the ADHS COVID-19 site at www.azhealth.gov/covid19vaccine.

Lastly, once Group 1A is vaccinated, Group 1B or 75+ and Essential Workers will begin to get vaccinated. See the [Essential Employer COVID-19 Vaccine Request Form \(google.com\)](#) from ADHS, along with the overall plan from Arizona VAPAC at [vapac-recommendations-draft-proposal.pdf \(azdhs.gov\)](http://vapac-recommendations-draft-proposal.pdf).

Post Vaccine Guidance

Gov. Ducey Extends COVID-19 Good Samaritan Executive Order

Gov. Ducey on December 31, 2020 announced a three-month extension to the Good Samaritan executive order from last April in regard to the COVID-19 pandemic. The order was touted as a way to shield health care professionals and facilities from liability. The extension of Executive Order 2020-27 to [Executive Order 2020-63](#) will keep immunity in health care through March 31, 2021. Basically, the extension of the executive order will help maintain staffing levels in hospitals and ensure medical professionals are protected when acting in good faith in emergency situations. AHCA would like to see this immunity extended through the COVID-19 public health emergency, but that may take legislative action or Congressional action.



CDC Develops Post-Vaccine Smartphone Check-in App

The CDC has developed a new, [voluntary smartphone-based tool, v-safe](#). This is a smartphone-based tool that uses text messaging and web surveys to provide personalized health check-ins after you receive a COVID-19 vaccination. Through v-safe, you can quickly tell CDC if you have any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. Depending on your answers, someone from CDC may call to check on you and get more information. And v-safe will remind you to get your second COVID-19 vaccine dose if you need one.

The CDC/v-safe call center follows up on reports to v-safe that indicate a medically significant health impact to collect additional information for completion of a VAERS report. Information and how to register in v-safe is available [here](#). Information on how to use both reporting systems is included in the EUA Fact Sheet (11).

CDC Post-Vaccine Guidance for Residents

The CDC has a [Post-Vaccine Considerations for Residents webpage](#) that covers infection prevention and control considerations for residents of long term care facilities with systemic signs and symptoms following COVID-19 vaccination.

AHCA/NCAL Post Vaccine Resources

AHCA/NCAL has posted several resources related to vaccinations. This includes [Guidance on Staffing Consideration Post-Vaccination for COVID-19](#), which builds upon CDC's [post-vaccine consideration for healthcare workers](#). Also available is a COVID-19 Vaccine Employment Questions [FAQ](#) which covers several questions regarding federal mandates, employer responsibilities and managing requested exemptions. A COVID-19 Vaccine Clinical Questions [FAQ](#) addresses preexisting conditions and allergic reactions.

EEOC Vaccination Guidance for Employers

In other news for the sector, the EEOC put out a vaccination guidance that centers can use in regard to employment requirements. You can [click here](#) to learn what you should know about COVID-19 and the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and other EEO laws.

Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System

Adverse events that occur in a recipient after receipt of COVID-19 vaccine should be reported to the Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS). FDA requires that vaccination providers report vaccination administration errors, serious adverse events, cases of multisystem inflammatory syndrome, and cases of COVID-19 that result in hospitalization or death after administration of COVID-19 vaccine under EUA.

Reporting by anyone who gives or receives a COVID-19 vaccine is encouraged for any clinically significant adverse event, whether or not it is clear that a vaccine caused the adverse event. Information on how to submit a report to VAERS is available [here](#), or call 1-800-822-7967.



Health Current Releases New Resources to Help Providers Stay in Compliance

Health Current recently released new resources to assist providers with meeting the April, 2021 compliance deadline for the Information Blocking rules. [Click here](#) to see the FAQ, HIPAA review checklist and a No Information Blocking Policy Template that providers can use to help develop policies. Should you have further questions please contact Health Current at www.healthcurrent.org.

STATE / PUBLIC POLICY

Important SNF Provider Assessment Dates for 2021

As you know, without the SNF provider assessment in Arizona, SNFs would be greatly underfunded and lose out on over \$100 million per year. So, it is extremely important for you to pay your provider assessment on time. We know this is very difficult during this time of COVID, but it's the only way to gain federal reimbursement. The next assessment is due on January 20, 2021. If you don't receive a bill from the AZ Department of Revenue, please let me know directly. Remember that you are legally bound to pay this tax bill in full... it's baked into the statute that the AHCCCS Director can tell ADHS to suspend or revoke your license pursuant to Section 36-427.

AZ Provider Assessment 2020-2021

Period	Due Date	Funds to AHCCCS	Payments to MCO	Payments to SNF
10/1/2020 - 12/31/2020	1/20/2021	2/20/2021	2/28/2021	3/20/2021
1/1/2021 - 3/31/2021	4/20/2021	5/15/2021	5/28/2021	6/17/2021
4/1/2021 - 6/30/2021	7/20/2021	8/15/2021	8/28/2021	9/17/2021
7/1/2021 - 9/30/2021	10/20/2021	11/15/2021	11/28/2021	12/18/2021



Disaster Ready Virtual Session: COVID-19 and the Nursing Home Incident Command System

If you have any questions about infection control you can email the DR EPIC Online Helpline at EPIC@azhca.org.

You can also call the DR EPIC phone Helpline at 602-241-4644 and we will assist you.

Join *Disaster Ready's* Stan and Gil as they present a brief “stand-up” session on the use of the Nursing Home Incident Command System (NHICS). [Click here](#) to view this two-minute video. This can be of great use during the on-going management of COVID-19. For more information on this topic, contact Gil Damiani, Disaster Ready / EPIC consultant at gild@azhca.org or call him on his mobile number at 480-682-7760.

Arizona Health Care Foundation Call for Nominations

The Arizona Health Care Foundation (AHCF) is looking for three (3) Directors to serve on the board for 2021. This will be a three year term (2021-2023). Nominations are due by Friday, January 8, 2021. Elections and installation of the AHCF Directors will take place at the AHCF Annual Meeting on February 5, 2021.

To submit a nomination, including nominating yourself, please [click here](#).



If you would like an application, please contact Krysten Dobson at kdobson@azhca.org or 602-265-5331

UPCOMING SEMINARS & WEBINARS

AHCA Webinar 1 CEU NCA
Standards of Care: Master the Core Elements of LTC Clinical Excellence
1 of 12 **Something Seems Off—Identifying Changes in Condition**
Wednesday, January 20, 2021 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm \$35 member \$50 non-member
Presenter: Eleisha Wilkes, RN, RAC-CT, RAC-CTA, Clinical Consultant, Proactive Medical Review
TARGET AUDIENCE: DOH, ADOKs, Nurse Managers, ISODES Staff, Licensed Nurses, Quality Personnel, Rehabilitation Staff, Administrators

January 20 | Webinar

Standards of Care, Identifying Changes in Condition

(1.0 CEUs)

Presenter:
Eleisha Wilkes
RN, RAC-CT, RAC-CTA,
Clinical Consultant,
Proactive Medical Review

[Register Here](#)

AHCA EPIC 3 CEUs NCA
N-95 Respirator Fit Testing: A Train-the-Trainer Program
Practical training to become a respirator fit test provider for your facility.
Socially distanced training for 10 registrants per session.
First come, first served basis (one registrant per facility).
Thursday, January 21, 2021
Morning Session: 8:30 am – 12:00 pm (Afternoon Session: 1:00 pm – 4:30 pm)
7302 W. Chicago Street, Chandler, AZ 85226 (Office of Clark Seif Clark, Inc.)
WARNING: This respirator is being worn. Respiratory protection should be maintained. Failure may result in serious or fatal injury.
Training Fee Only, \$450
Training + Respirator Fit Test Kit, \$699
Kit includes: hood, filter solution set and 2 respirators
Trainer: Derrick A. Denis, CIAQP, CAC, CIEC, Vice President, Indoor Environmental Quality, Clark Seif Clark, Inc. (CSC)
TARGET AUDIENCE: Infection Preventionists, DOKs, ADOKs, RNs

January 21 | Seminar

N-95 Respirator Fit Testing: A Train-the-Trainer Program

(3.0 CEUs)

Presenter:
Derrick Denis
CIAQP, CAC, CIEC, Vice President, Indoor
Environmental Quality,
Clark Seif Clark, Inc. (CSC)

[Register Here](#)

Need more CEUs? Check out AHCA's On-Demand Webinar Portal

Winter State of the State with the Hertel Report

January 22 | 8:00am-10:30am Virtual

Guest Speakers: *Arizona healthcare leaders* provide fresh insight and trends impacting our local managed care including Medicare Advantage, ACO/Direct Contracting Entities and Value-based Networks, Health Insurance Marketplace, ACA & SCOUTS, other Headline News - COVID-19

\$125 Registration / \$15 Off Registration or Members of Our Community Partner organizations like AHCA. Use coupon code: ahca2021



[Register Here](#)



Mark your calendars for our ... **Thursday Calls**

Get the latest information on Social Work, Safety and DON

January 7 | 10:00 am

DON with Kay Huff

866-839-6133
799 395 9020

January 14 | 12:30 pm

Social Work with Paige Hector

712-770-4700
968760

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