

Session 7: COVID-19 Community Transmission and Nursing Home Screening Strategies

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| <p>Key Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on prevention and keeping COVID-19 out of Nursing Homes. Understand the relationship between increased rates of COVID-19 community transmission (case rates) and the increased risk of COVID-19 spreading to nursing home staff and residents. • Careful screening may help limit COVID-19 spread. Educate staff members, residents, visitors on the risks of asymptomatic individuals bringing COVID-19 into the nursing home when they are still contagious. • Having leaders visible in designated screening areas and supporting staff training on proper screening protocols promotes accountability for identifying and managing risks related to COVID-19. <p>The following question set can be used to facilitate discussions and reveal opportunities across and within key members of interprofessional teams, residents and visitors. Please consider using/adapting them in your next huddles or team meetings.</p> | |
| Questions by Content | |
| Integrate screening protocols into overall infection prevention and management plan | <p>Are screening protocols for staff members, non-essential workers or contractors/vendors, visitors, and residents detailed in the Infection Prevention and Control Program (IPCP)?</p> <p>Are there written communication materials (e.g., flyers) to inform everyone entering the nursing home about required screening protocols and potential restrictions?</p> |
| Documenting and Reporting Screening Results | <p>Is there a process in place for documenting all screening activities (e.g., individuals screened, responses to screening questions, temperature, action/s taken if screen is positive)? Are screening results compiled and results reported to leadership?</p> |
| Follow-Up Plan (monitoring over time) | <p>Is there a COVID-19 Team or Task Force that reviews screening results, actions taken, documentation on a regular basis? Are updates/changes to processes and systems made in a timely manner and shared with relevant stakeholders?</p> |
| Improvement Concepts | <p>Is the IP or designee in regular communication with local (e.g., municipal or board of health) officials to learn about any additional updates to community transmission/case rates?</p> <p>Does the IP ask staff members (particularly direct care workers) and visitors for feedback on what would improve the screening process?</p> |
| Critical Questions for Leadership | |
| | <p>Is there evidence that the IP or appropriately trained designee is following nursing home protocols for screening and visitation?</p> <p>Do all relevant staff state that they have a basic understanding of screening processes?</p> |
| Key Concepts by Stakeholder Group | |
| What do Medical Directors Need to know and discuss with the team? | <p>Medical directors must be familiar with nursing home policies on immediate actions when a staff member screens positive (don a mask if not wearing one, leave the nursing home, contact healthcare provider).</p> <p>Medical directors must meet or speak regularly with the IP, DON, Administrator and the nursing home's COVID-19 Team or Task Force to review and update screening policies, particularly if/when rates of COVID-19 community transmission change.</p> |
| What do DONs and nursing supervisors need to know? | <p>DONs must have contact information for individuals at the state department of public health and/or local boards of health who can answer questions about COVID-19 screening in nursing homes in that city/town or state.</p> <p>DONs must have a system for assessing and monitoring staff knowledge and skills related to COVID-19 screening and actions to be taken if someone screens positive.</p> |
| What does the interprofessional team need to know? | <p>Team members must know how to recognize potential signs/symptoms of COVID-19 and how to report and document (to whom and how soon).</p> <p>Teams must demonstrate open, frequent, supportive communication across and within departments and between point-of-care (direct care) workers and leadership/administration.</p> <p>Team members (all departments) must be able to describe immediate actions to take if a new or suspected case of COVID-19 is identified through screening or other means of detection. Team members must consistently and reliably demonstrate that they document and report any concerns to their supervisor or leadership in a timely manner.</p> |