



COVID-19 in Indian Country: Updated Considerations and Resources for LTSS

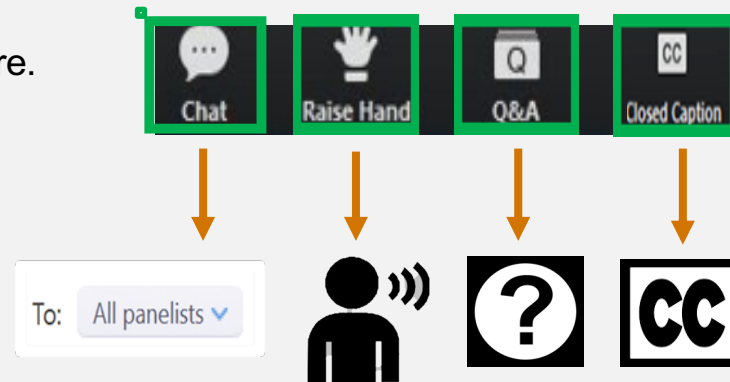
February 23, 2022

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COVID-19 in Indian Country: Updated Considerations and Resources for LTSS



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The State of COVID-19 in United States

- SARS-CoV-2 is the virus known as COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019)
 - Delta Variant
 - Omicron Variant
- High risk for complications and severe illness include:
 - Elderly
 - Underlying health conditions
 - Unvaccinated
- Vaccines and boosters reduce the risk of complication and death
- As of February 2022, in the U.S.
 - 1,045,00 deaths directly or indirectly attributed to COVID-19
 - 914,000 death certificates listed COVID-19 as cause of death

The State of COVID-19 in Indian Country

- Over 10,000 AI/AN people died due to COVID-19
- Highest death rates
 - Arizona
 - California
 - New Mexico
 - Oklahoma
- Tribes are leading the way in treatment of their people
 - Mask mandates
 - Testing requirements/eligibility
 - Vaccination eligibility
 - Social distancing measures

Inequity and COVID-19



COVID-19 Weekly Deaths per 100,000 Population by Race/Ethnicity, United States

March 01, 2020 - February 19, 2022*



Jurisdiction
US

3/7/2020 2/19/2022

Cases

Sex

Age - All Groups

Pediatric Case Proportions

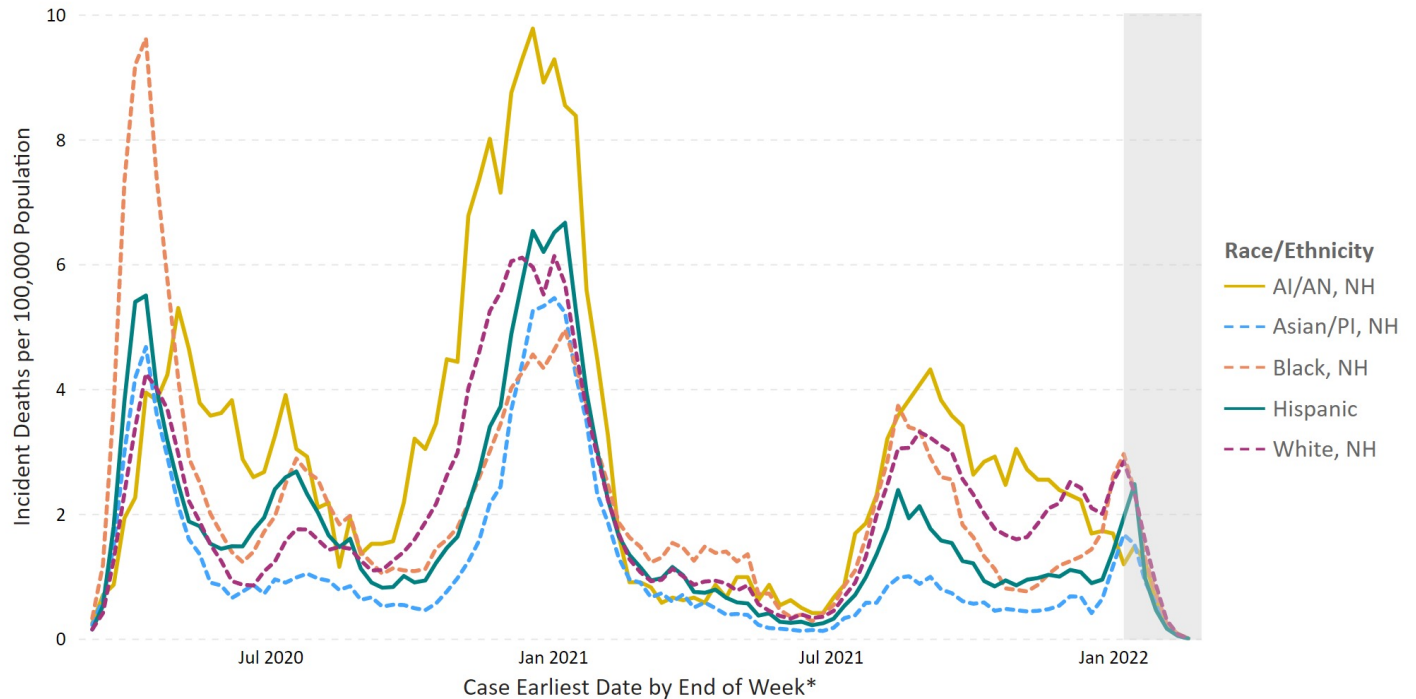
Race/Ethnicity

Deaths

Sex

Age - All Groups

Race/Ethnicity



US: The most recent line level case record was reported during the week ending on Feb 19, 2022. Percentage of deaths among reported cases - 1.27%. Percentage of deaths reporting race by date - 83.19%.

US territories are included in case and death counts but not in population counts. Potential six-week delay in case reporting to CDC denoted by gray bars. AI = American Indian, AN = Alaska Native, NH = Non-Hispanic, PI = Pacific Islander. Excludes cases with unknown or multiple races.

*Case Earliest Date is the earliest of the clinical date (related to illness or specimen collection and chosen by a defined hierarchy) and the Date Received by CDC. The date for the current week extends through Saturday.

Last Updated: Feb 22, 2022

Source: CDC COVID-19 Case Line-Level Data, 2019 US Census, HHS Protect; Visualization: Data, Analytics & Visualization Task Force and CDC CPR DEO Situational Awareness Public Health Science Team

Source: CDC. COVID-19 weekly cases and deaths per 100,000 population by age, race/ethnicity, and sex.

<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#demographicvertime>. Accessed February 22, 2022.

Protecting our Community Members





Indian Health Service Four Prong Approach to Address COVID-19 Four Strategies

- Prevent
- Detect
- Treat
- Recover

Indian Health Service Approach

Four Strategies

Prevent

- Get vaccinated, including boosters
 - IHS Vaccination rates as of Jan. 25, 2022
 - 2.1 M doses administered
 - 70.5% ages 18 and over with one dose
 - 55.9% considered fully vaccinated
 - 33.5% have booster
- The 3 Ws:
 - Wear a mask
 - Wait 6 feet apart
 - Wash your hands

Indian Health Service Approach

Four Strategies

Detect

- 3.964 million tests have been performed
 - 11.1% positive
- IHS areas are in high transmission
- Majority of positive cases are unvaccinated
- Current 7-day rolling positivity is 32.6%
 - Home testing: QuickVue is available
 - USPS allowing for 4 tests per address
 - Various states may provide additional tests

Indian Health Service Approach

Four Strategies

Treat

- Therapeutics: Monoclonal antibody therapy is available
- Sotrovimab is effective against Omicron, but limited allocation
- The 2 oral antivirals are approved
 - Molnupiravir
 - Paxlovid

*Remdesivir can be given in the outpatient setting to decrease hospitalization

Indian Health Service Approach

Four Strategies

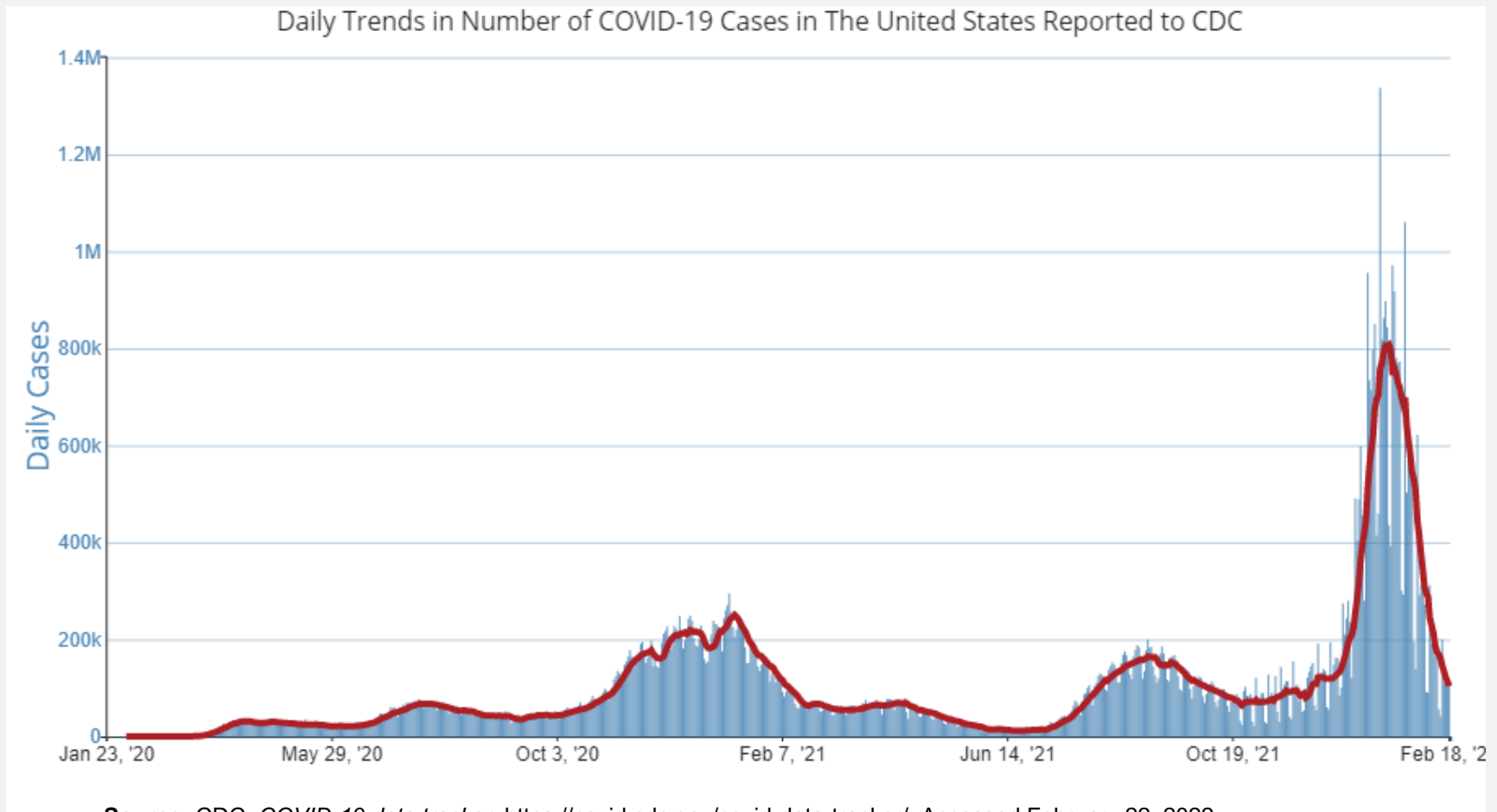
Recover

- Continue to address:
 - Trauma
 - Behavioral health
 - Substance use disorder
 - Grief and loss
- Monitoring and care of those who recovered from COVID-19 but may have post-COVID or long-COVID syndrome

COVID-19 Snapshot: February 2022

- Cases continue to spike unpredictably
- Although Omicron has begun to subside, variants will likely continue to emerge
- Widespread vaccination efforts, along with other measures, have helped reduce severe illness and death

COVID-19 Snapshot: February 2022



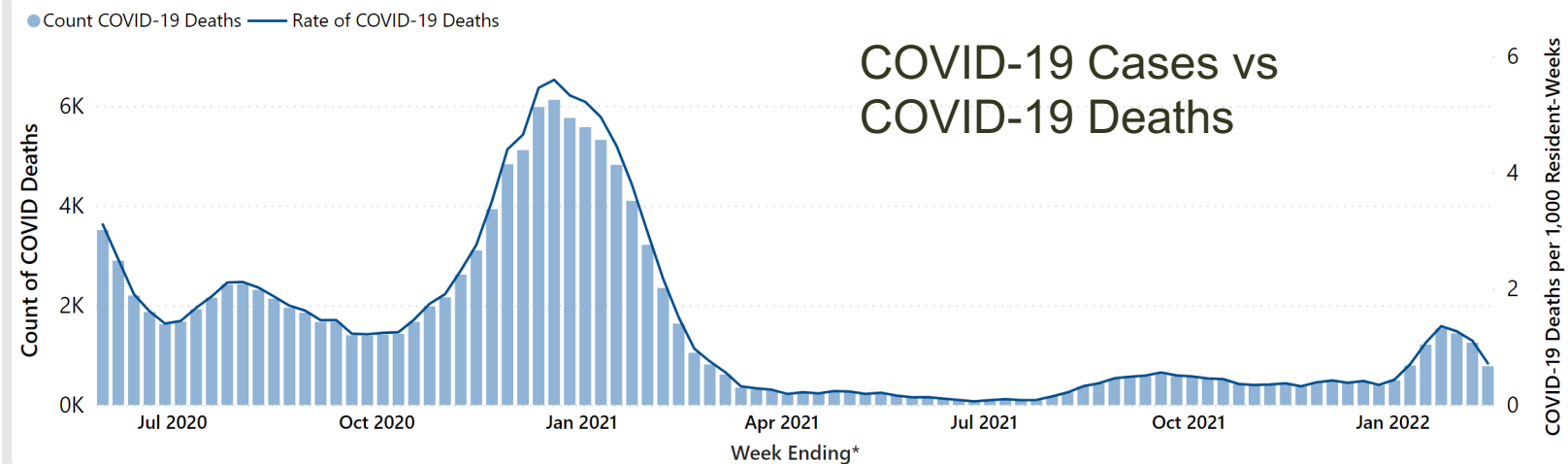
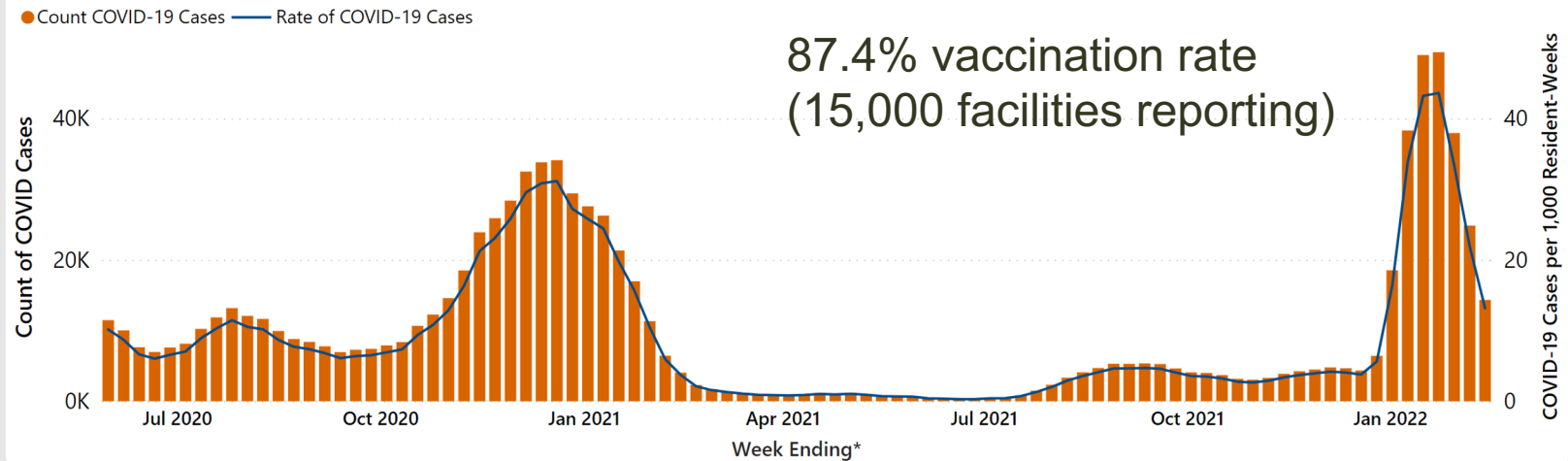
Source: CDC. COVID-19 data tracker. <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/>. Accessed February 22, 2022.

COVID-19 Snapshot: February 2022

Total Vaccine Doses		At Least One Dose	Fully Vaccinated	Booster Doses	Booster Eligible***
Delivered	686,495,805	Vaccinated People		Count	Percent of US Population
Administered	549,939,423	Total		252,791,817	76.1%
Learn more about the distribution of vaccines.		Population ≥ 5 Years of Age		252,723,259	80.9%
214.7M		Population ≥ 12 Years of Age		243,431,431	85.9%
People fully vaccinated		Population ≥ 18 Years of Age		226,419,573	87.7%
92.8M		Population ≥ 65 Years of Age		56,091,245	95%
People received a booster dose**					

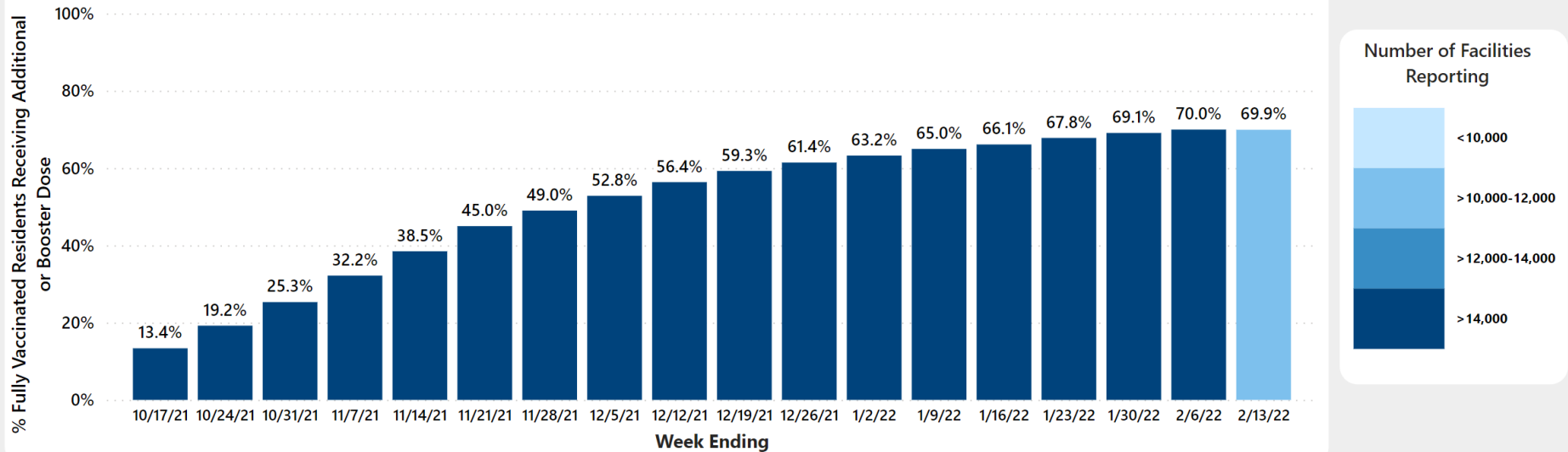
Source: CDC. COVID-19 data tracker. <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/>. Accessed February 22, 2022.

COVID-19 Trends in Nursing Homes



COVID-19 Trends in Nursing Homes

Percentage of Residents with Complete Vaccination Receiving Additional Primary or Booster Dose



Percentage of vaccinated residents who have also received at least 1 booster

Successful Efforts from Tribal Long-Term Care Facilities

Support for spiritual & emotional health of clients

- Family and community “window” visits
- Small groups outside
- Small settings to share a meal
- Video chats with family members
- Entertainment outside
- Increased in room activities
- Go live on Facebook
- Garden parties

Successful Efforts from Tribal Long-Term Care Facilities

Support for Facility Staff

- Increased transparency – sharing information about COVID-19, as it is learned and revised policies
- Stressing use of employee assistance programs – important to take care of self
- Special meals and cookouts
- Free meals, including Indian tacos
- Bonuses
- T-shirts and other items like pens, PPE
- Honoring in traditional ways to acknowledge their importance such as round dance, gift giving, smudge

Successful Efforts from Tribal Long-Term Care Facilities

Support for Family and Community

- Increased transparency – sharing information about COVID-19, as it is learned and revised policies
- How-to videos on important COVID-19 safely protocols such as handwashing, social distancing, vaccines, and mask wearing
- Radio PSAs
- On-call availability 24/7
- Sharing meals
- Virtual visits

Successful Efforts from Tribal Long-Term Care Facilities

Lessons learned

- Be creative – find new ways of meeting requirement such as patient exercise
- Increase use of technology
 - ◆ Find staff that are tech savvy
 - ◆ Electronic usages such as I-Pads, tablets, smart TVs in gathering locations across the facility
 - ◆ Facebook Live
- Develop partnership with state
- Improved infection control policies

Successful Efforts from Tribal Long-Term Care Facilities

“We realized we are family for patients for each other as staff. We have bonded together to get through the COVID-19 pandemic. We have grown together as we have tried hard.”

--Deb Arbogast
Medicine Wheel Village
Cheyenne River Sioux
Eagle Butte, SD

Updated CDC Guidance for LTSS Facilities

Most recent update: February 2, 2022

Key ongoing strategies

- Identify infections early
- Ensure all residents are vaccinated
- Always use proper personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Enforce social distancing
- Perform source control
- Stay up-to-date on the latest guidance from public health authorities

Updated guidance

- Infection prevention and control (IPC) programs
- Protection, preparation, and planning

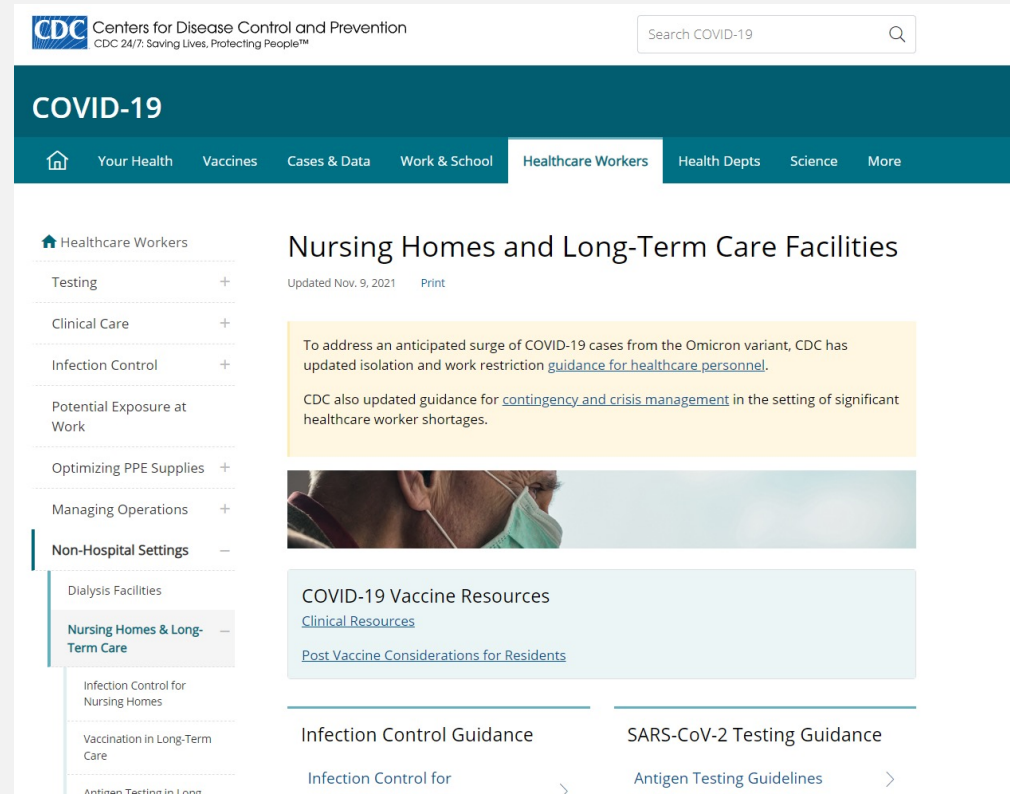


Sources: CDC. (2022, February 2). *Interim infection prevention and control recommendations for healthcare personnel during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.* <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>. Accessed February 21, 2022.

CDC. (2022, February 2). *Interim infection prevention and control recommendations to prevent SARS-CoV-2 spread in nursing homes.* <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html>. Accessed February 22, 2022.

CDC.gov

- CDC updated recommendations to combat COVID-19 in long-term care facilities
- Downloadable toolkits, checklists, media packs, training tools, and other resources.
- Examples include:
 - LTSS preparedness checklists
 - Guidance for suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases
 - Infographics on staying active while social distancing



Source: CDC. *Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) preparedness checklist for nursing homes and other long-term care settings*. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/novel-coronavirus-2019-Nursing-Homes-Preparedness-Checklist_3_13.pdf. Accessed February 22, 2022.

CDC's Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations to Prevent COVID in Nursing Homes

- Infection Prevention and Control Program
- Vaccinations
- Source Control and Physical Distancing Measures
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Testing
- Visitation
- Evaluating and Managing Personnel and Residents
- Managing Residents with Close Contact
- New Admissions and Residents who Leave the Facility
- New Infection in Healthcare Personnel or Residents

Source: CDC. (2022, February 2). *Interim infection prevention and control recommendations to prevent SARS-CoV-2 spread in nursing homes.* <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html>. Accessed February 22, 2022.


IPC Program Recommendations



- To whatever extent possible, provide **on-site management** of IPC
- Ensure the facility has enough supplies to adhere to recommended IPC practices
- Educate residents, health care personnel, (HCP) and visitors about COVID-19, precautionary measures in place, and what they can do to protect themselves
- Know when to notify the health department, HCP, residents, and families about outbreaks
- Report relevant data to public health authorities

Source: CDC. (2022, February 2). *Interim infection prevention and control recommendations to prevent SARS-CoV-2 spread in nursing homes.* <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html>. Accessed February 22, 2022.

Training Resources



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives. Protecting People™

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Project Firstline

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About Project Firstline

CDC's National Training Collaborative for Healthcare Infection Prevention & Control

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Resident Management Plan Checklist

Make sure your facility's COVID-19 plan addresses:

- ☐ Residents with confirmed/suspected COVID-19 infection
- ☐ Residents who have had close contact with someone who is confirmed/suspected to have COVID-19
- ☐ New admissions
- ☐ Re-admissions
- ☐ Visitation
- ☐ Communications
- ☐ New infections



Source: CDC. (2022, February 2). *Interim infection prevention and control recommendations to prevent SARS-CoV-2 spread in nursing homes.* <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html>. Accessed February 22, 2022.

Supporting the Emotional Health of Residents

- How are you supporting emotional health during this time?
- How are you communicating information about the pandemic to residents and their families?
- Can you help clients establish a buddy system?
- How are residents communicating with their family members?
- How can residents connect to nature?
- How are residents engaging in spiritual practices?
- What kinds of cognitive and physical activities are your residents engaging in?



Supporting the Emotional Health of Caregivers and Providers

- Are you feeling compassion fatigue?
- Do you feel you can ask for help from supervisors and friends?
- Do you have someone you can talk with about how you are feeling?
- How often are you engaging with your family and loved ones?
- Do you take moments throughout the day to nourish and replenish?
- Does media make you feel better or worse?
- Are there other ways you can engage in ceremony or a spiritual practice?

Ask for help if you feel overwhelmed or concerned that COVID-19 is affecting your ability to care for your patients!
Toll-free disaster distress helpline: (800) 985-5990

CMS LTSS Technical Assistance Center

What you'll find in the LTSS Technical Assistance Center:

- LTSS webinar archive
- LTSS newsletter archive
- Resources and toolkits
- Planning documents
- Profiles of LTSS programs



Source: CMS. *Long-term services and supports technical assistance center.* <https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/American-Indian-Alaska-Native/AIAN/LTSS-TA-Center>. Accessed February 21, 2022.

LTSS Newsletter and Newsletter Archive

LTSS Newsletter





The LTSS newsletter shares news, funding and webinar announcements, and online resources at the LTSS TA Center. Designed for health planners, health department or program employees, care providers, tribal leaders, community advocates, and anyone else interested in LTSS, the newsletter is published monthly and emailed to those who have signed up to receive it.

[Sign up for the newsletter.](#)

Newsletter Archive

Read past newsletters dating back to November 2014, when the first edition was published.

2021

Month	Newsletter Information
<p>December</p> 	<p>View the December Newsletter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe ways to promote social engagement • Benefits of HCBS for people with disabilities • Community Health Profiles: disability prevalence in UIO service areas • USAgeing holiday 2021 webinar and recording archive • FDA and CDC expand eligibility for COVID-19 booster shots • CMS releases FY 2021 report on rural health initiatives • CMS completes nationwide study on rural bypass • Toolkit launched for combating health misinformation • IHS behavioral health funding • John Hopkins Center for American Indian Health 2022 Virtual Winter Institute
<p>November</p> 	<p>View the November Newsletter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal leader support for caregivers • National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month



Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
www.cms.gov www.medicare.gov www.medicare.gov

LTSS Newsletter—December 2021
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) sent this bulletin at 12/20/2021 09:00 AM EST

Stay tuned for the next LTSS webinar in January 2022

American Indian/Alaska Native Long-Term Services and Supports

SOLUTIONS

Technical assistance for culturally competent care
December 2021



LTSS Technical Assistance Center

Visit the online LTSS TA Center for videos, best practices, toolkits, a resource library, and a step-by-step planning roadmap.

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Safe ways to promote social engagement

Research suggests that finding opportunities for meaningful exchange and interaction during the COVID-19 pandemic has been especially challenging for elders, people with disabilities, and caregivers.

Benefits of HCBS for people with disabilities

Many adults with disabilities find it difficult to form meaningful relationships in institutional care settings.

Source: CMS. *LTSS newsletter*. <https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/American-Indian-Alaska-Native/AIAN/LTSS-TA-Center/ltss-newsletter>. Accessed February 22, 2022.

Summary

- COVID-19 disproportionately affects AI/ANs in both prevalence and severity
- AI/AN tribes and communities actively respond to protect their communities, and continue to do so as new variants emerge
- Continue implementing established preventive measures (e.g., PPE, social distancing, vaccination, education)
- Take the necessary steps to establish an effective IPC program, managed by designated on-site personnel
- Create a plan for managing COVID-19 among residents, visitors, and staff
- Visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) for updates, guidance, training tools, data, and other resources
- Subscribe to the LTSS newsletter to stay informed about all the latest developments, guidance, training tools, and more



Questions?



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