Date: April 27, 2020

To: Oklahoma Nursing and Skilled Nursing Facilities

From: Gary Cox, JD
Commissioner
Oklahoma State Department of Health

Subject: Mandated CMS Guidance for Nursing Facilities


The purpose of this memo is to advise you that, effective immediately and until further notice, the Oklahoma State Department of Health is making the above linked guidance mandatory and not discretionary on the part of our nursing and skilled nursing facilities. Where the above linked guidance uses the term should, nursing and skilled nursing facilities shall carry out those guidelines.

I will draw your attention to the following requirements:

1. All staff shall wear a facemask at all times in the facility.

2. Facilities shall do a self-assessment to determine their compliance with CMS and CDC guidance related to infection control.

3. Anyone entering the building shall be actively screened for COVID-19.

4. If COVID-19 transmission occurs in the facility, healthcare personnel shall wear full PPE for the care of all residents irrespective of COVID-19 diagnosis or symptoms. However, staff shall not wear the same PPE between COVID positive and non-COVID positive resident groups.

5. Facilities shall use separate staffing teams for COVID-19-positive residents to the best of their ability, and shall separate COVID-19 negative residents from COVID-19 positive residents.

I want to applaud you for your efforts in this extraordinary time and ask that you remain vigilant in the practice of infection control. Thank you for your efforts on behalf of our most vulnerable populations.