HAWAI'I DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO DISBURSE $30,000 TO ENABLE VIRTUAL VISITS WITH KUPUNA IN SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES

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HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Department of Health is disbursing a total of $30,000 to 23 skilled nursing facilities in the state for communications devices that will allow seniors at these facilities to stay in touch with their family and friends during the current pandemic.

Since mid-March 2020, skilled nursing facilities have prohibited visitors and nonessential personnel from visiting their facilities to adhere to strict physical distancing guidance to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to protect vulnerable seniors in these facilities.

"With restrictions on face-to-face, in-person visits still in place, the grants will provide the tools skilled nursing facilities need to provide emotional support for their residents," said Keith Ridley, chief of the Department of Health's Office of Health Care Assurance (OHCA), which oversees and regulates skilled nursing facilities.

The skilled nursing facilities that are receiving grants include:

Facility Name	Total Award
15 Craigside	$1,288.00
Aloha Nursing & Rehab Centre	$1,041.89
Ann Pearl	$ 900.00
Arcadia Retirement Residence	$1,288.00
Avalon Care Center – HNL	$1,080.00

Garden Isle	$1,200.00
Hale Kupuna	$ 900.00
Hale Nani Rehab. & Nursing	$2,160.00
Kalakaua Gardens	$1,466.88
Kauai Care Center	$ 672.00
Kauai Veterans Memorial Hospital	$1,988.00
Kuakini Geriatric Care	$1,197.00
Legacy Hilo	$ 900.00
Liliha Healthcare Center	$1,480.00
Nuuanu Hale	$1,480.00
Oahu Care Facility	$1,130.97
Palolo Chinese Home	$ 989.97
Pohai Nani	$2,434.08
Puuwai of Makaha	$ 600.00
Samuel Mahelona	$1,988.00
The Villas	$1,200.00
Wahiawa General Hospital	$1,513.39
Yukio Okutsu State Vet	$1,080.00

Ridley said the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) gave states authority to approve applications from skilled nursing facilities for COVID-19 communication technologies to expedite the approval process. The funds are provided as grants from the CMS Civil Monetary Penalty (CMP) Reinvestment Program, are limited to $3,000 for each facility, and are earmarked for communication technologies such as tablets or other devices and accessories.

OHCA is limited to disbursements of $30,000 per fiscal year, according to state statute. The skilled nursing facilities will receive their grants by June 30, 2020, the end of the fiscal year. Additional grants will be awarded after the start of the new fiscal year on July 1, 2020 and, pending CMS approval, grants may be used for other services to improve the quality of life for the residents.

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PDF: DOH to disperse $30,000 to enable virtual visits with kupuna in skilled nursing facilities