MDHHS Implementing Strategies in Long-term Care Facilities to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19 and Protect Residents and Staff

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 20, 2020
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LANSING, MICH. To implement and support the goals of **Executive Order 2020-50**, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is rolling out a comprehensive strategy to combat the impact of COVID-19 in long-term care settings and ensure residents and employees are protected. This includes an **Emergency Order** issued by MDHHS Director Robert Gordon regarding transfers and reporting requirements.

The strategy includes the following actions:

1. Mandates enhanced reporting requirements for all long-term care settings.
2. Activates a COVID-19 Infection Prevention Resource and Assessment Team (COVID iPRAT).
3. Establishes MDHHS-designated COVID-19 Regional Hubs.

Beginning April 21, MDHHS will mandate all long-term-care facilities (nursing homes, homes for the aged, adult foster care facilities and assisted living facilities) submit daily reports to MDHHS. Using the EMResource platform, facilities will be required to submit up-to-date information regarding current capacity/bed availability, personal protective equipment inventory and the current number of COVID-19 cases and deaths within their facility.

“We know older Michiganders and those with underlying health conditions are at higher risk for more severe complications from COVID-19,” said Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, chief medical executive and chief deputy for health. “Enhanced and timely reporting of cases in long term care facilities, as well as proactive training and technical assistance will help protect these vulnerable individuals.”

MDHHS has established a COVID iPRAT team comprised of staff members from across the Public Health Administration Division of Communicable Diseases. The COVID iPRAT was designed to help prevent COVID-19 infections and contain the spread of COVID-19 in long-term care facilities. The team will work closely with the Medical Services Administration, Michigan Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Michigan Licensing and Regulatory Affairs and local health department partners.

Through the iPRAT, local health departments and long-term care facilities in their jurisdiction will have access to training on the latest MDHHS, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services guidance. Additionally, facilities will receive focused review of infection control policies and procedures, standardized trainings and protocols, remote contact tracing assistance and remote facilitation of an Infection Prevention and Control Assessment using CDC's Tele-ICAR tool.

"The spread of COVID-19 has had a significant impact on residents and employees at Michigan's longterm care facilities," said Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. "A strong cross department, state and local partnership will help combat the spread of this virus and protect residents and staff of these facilities."

MDHHS has also established a regional hub strategy to assist in reducing the spread of COVID-19 within congregate care settings. COVID-19 Regional Hubs are dedicated to treating COVID-19-affected individuals from congregate care settings who do not require hospital-level care. COVID-19 Regional Hubs will be designated by MDHHS and announced as they are established. Facilities across the state are being considered for this model based on willingness to serve as a hub facility, capacity to contribute to local need for services, proximity to acute care facilities experiencing high COVID-19-related demand, ability to effectively quarantine COVID-19-affected residents and performance history of the facility. COVID-19 Regional Hubs will be required to complete enhanced reporting to the department on a daily basis.

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at **Michigan.gov/Coronavirus** and **CDC.gov/Coronavirus**.

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