



UMBRELLA MESSAGE:

Long term care providers have performed heroic work in the face of a historic challenge. We have taken extraordinary measures to protect an extremely vulnerable population. But we can't do it alone. It is time for the country to rally around our nation's nursing homes and assisted living communities.

PILLAR ONE: Doing What's Right for Residents

Caregivers are putting residents before themselves and their families. They're demonstrating the compassion and commitment to selfless service that residents and their families expect. That's our charge to keep.

- **We're Keeping Our Promises:** It's not just marketing; residents are like family. Every time a caregiver comes to work, they are risking their lives. Because doing everything in our power to keep residents safe and healthy – physically and emotionally – is of paramount concern to all of us.
- **We're Remembering the Person:** This is an extremely challenging and isolating time. We can't forget the importance of our residents' mental and emotional well-being. So, we're working with compassion to create meaningful connections with friends and loved ones that are safe and appropriate. Non-essential visits must be restricted, but providers won't let residents navigate this alone.
- **There Is More Work To Be Done:** We applaud the administration's recent announcement to make LTC facilities a priority for testing. As we can ramp up testing, we will see "spikes" in positive tests. But it's the only way we'll know what's really happening. And that's key to preventing further spread.
- **We're All In This Together:** Communities across the country are rallying behind seniors and caregivers alike. The National Guard is assisting in aggressive cleaning and disinfecting operations. The public is responding to calls for PPE donations, and more help is on the way. But more is required in the short- and long-term to keep residents and caregivers safe, and our LTC communities viable.

PILLAR TWO: Our Plan To Win

Caregivers, residents and their loved ones are in this fight together. Until public health policy catches up with our community needs, LTC facilities are doing everything in their power to keep residents safe.

- **Caution and Care:** LTC facilities are taking unprecedented steps to prevent further spread. All facilities are following government orders to restrict non-essential visits, and many have created isolation wings to keep confirmed positive residents from other residents. These are necessary steps to keep everyone safe.
- **Unwavering Commitment:** Our dedicated and heroic caregivers are working around the clock to keep our residents safe. Despite the challenges we face, most residents and staff members who are diagnosed with the virus make a full recovery. With the proper resources, we can ensure even more positive outcomes.
- **Using What We Have As Best We Can:** Unprecedented demand for PPE and the nonprioritization of LTC facilities in public health policy has left residents and caregivers needlessly exposed. Nearly three in five facilities are using homemade or improvised PPE or reusing it. We applaud Vice President Pence's recent announcement that FEMA will be expediting the direct shipment of PPE supplies to more than 15,000 nursing homes across the country. These supplies cannot come soon enough.
- **Maintaining Routines and Strengthening Bonds:** Caregivers and patients are like family. The policies we're encouraging are enhancing those relationships. Many facilities are using tactics like consistent assignment to limit the number of people interacting with each resident. Familiarity, reliability and routine are important parts of a resident's overall health – and we're doing everything possible to meet their needs in the face of significant workforce reductions.

PILLAR THREE: Building Policies That Fit Our Needs

Local, state and federal bureaucracies cannot maintain the status quo without jeopardizing the most vulnerable in our society. The crisis has exposed gaps in public health policy, and we need immediate change.

- **Equipping LTC Facilities to Keep Residents Safe:** Residents need help with eating, bathing, washing and other high-touch activities. But we cannot protect them if caregivers are not themselves protected. Providing LTC facilities with adequate PPE over the near- and long-term is essential to slowing the spread of this virus and other illnesses.
- **Testing Is Our Blind Spot:** The biggest challenge LTC facilities face is access to timely testing for residents and caregivers, with symptoms and without. The CDC found that many nursing home residents test positive but are asymptomatic – and may be able to transmit the virus. The administration's recent announcement to make LTC facilities a priority for testing is taking us in the right direction, but we must commit to broad and timely testing to prevent further spread.
- **Supporting An Essential Workforce:** Many caregivers have become ill and gone into quarantine. Others have been forced out of work because they're providing childcare. Staffing shortages have been greatly exacerbated by this crisis. Without financial support, providers face uncertain futures – and so do residents.
- **Public Health Policy Can't Leave Us Behind:** The people we care for are high risk – not just now, but always. Public health policy must reorient itself to our community's needs so we can do everything possible to keep our residents safe. And emergency relief is critical, just as it was for hospitals.