



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
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Dear Colleagues:

In response to the COVID-19 emergency, Massachusetts is taking unprecedented steps to establish dedicated skilled nursing facilities to care for people with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis. These measures are being taken to ensure capacity at acute care hospitals to address the anticipated surge in demand over the coming weeks.

Beaumont Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing Center in Worcester will be the first of these designated sites. Patients who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, and who are stable but need nursing facility level of care will begin to be transferred from hospitals to this nursing facility next week. Transferring patients to dedicated facilities such as Beaumont, where they can continue to receive nursing facility levels of care, including oxygen, will provide acute care hospitals with the additional capacity for incoming patients who need hospital level acute care.

Implementing these transfers will require significant coordination between the Commonwealth, hospitals, nursing facilities and chronic disease rehabilitation facilities, as well as, resident communities and their families. To establish dedicated COVID-19 care sites at these nursing and rehabilitation facilities, it will require existing residents to temporarily move to other facilities in the area, where they will continue to receive nursing home care. These transitions will occur with the utmost care. Additionally, we ask that family members continue to follow DPH guidance and refrain from visiting the nursing facility to prevent potential spread of COVID-19.

We understand this is not an easy thing to ask residents, families, and nursing facilities to do, but it is necessary for the health and safety of the current residents and to ensure COVID-19 patients are receiving care in appropriate medical settings and that hospitals can sustainability handle the anticipated surge of care demands caused by the outbreak.

The Commonwealth is actively seeking additional facilities to serve as dedicated COVID-19 sites of care. MassHealth, the state's Medicaid program, and private insurers are working closely with nursing facilities to establish the financing structures to support these efforts.

We appreciate the incredible efforts being made by all of the staff and caregivers who have stepped up in an unprecedented way to meet the needs of our most vulnerable residents during this emergency. If there are any questions, please call the Department of Public Health's Division of Health Care Quality's call-line: (617)753-8150 for assistance during this period. Thank you.

Sincerely,

  
Marylou Sudders