Aging Services Risk, Quality, & Safety Guidance

Professional Organizations Release Updated Guidelines in Response to the COVID-19 Outbreak in Washington State

What’s the news

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak at a nursing home in the state of Washington that has killed four residents as of this writing, both the American Health Care Association and the Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine have issued updated infection control guidelines. Each organization calls for increasing hand hygiene practices, isolating infected individuals, ensuring healthcare workers stay home when sick, screening visitors, conducting daily temperature checks for residents and staff, and asking family members who are sick to avoid in-person visits. To help healthcare facilities prepare for potential outbreaks, on February 29, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released Steps Healthcare Facilities Can Take Now to Prepare for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). CDC’s advice for being prepared for an outbreak includes staying informed about the local COVID-19 situation; developing or reviewing the organization’s emergency plan; establishing relationships with healthcare and public health partners in the community; and creating an emergency contact list.

Why it matters

Older adults and immunocompromised individuals are more susceptible to infection and aging services organizations must be prepared to respond to a potential outbreak of COVID-19 in their community. On February 27, 2020, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said that a COVID-19 outbreak could lead to disruptions or shortages regarding drugs and medical devices, for which aging services organizations need to plan.

How ECRI can help


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