COVID-19 and Nursing Homes

David C. Grabowski, PhD
@DavidCGrabowski

June 26, 2020
COVID and Nursing Homes

- 240,000 Cases
- 9,800 Facilities
- 50,000 Deaths

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation, 6/18/20
Number of state-reported COVID-19 deaths in long-term care facilities has nearly *quintupled* over a 2-month period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>States</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 23rd</td>
<td>23 states</td>
<td>10,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 21st</td>
<td>37 states</td>
<td>35,118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 18th</td>
<td>41 states</td>
<td>50,185</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: States vary in types of facilities included, whether data are cumulative, and whether totals include staff and residents.

SOURCE: KFF, “State Reporting of Cases and Deaths Due to COVID-19 in Long-Term Care Facilities”, April 2020, and KFF analysis of state reporting of COVID-19 cases and deaths in LTC facilities available in “Additional State-level Data” section of KFF state COVID-19 data and policy actions tracker.
Deaths in long-term care facilities account for a majority of COVID-19 deaths in most states

LTC facility deaths as share of total

NOTE: COVID-19 deaths in LTCFs as share of total state deaths cannot be determined for the following nine states, either due to limitations in data reported or lack of any COVID-19 reporting for LTCFs: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Hawaii, Missouri, Montana, New Mexico, and South Dakota. States vary in types of facilities included, whether data are cumulative, and whether totals include staff and residents.

SOURCE: KFF analysis of state reporting of COVID-19 cases and deaths in long-term care facilities available in “Additional State-level Data” section of KFF state COVID-19 data and policy actions tracker.
US Similar to OECD Average

Percentage of All COVID Deaths, LCFs

- Hungary: 7%
- Slovenia: 9%
- Netherlands: 15%
- Austria: 19%
- Portugal: 25%
- U.K.: 27%
- Australia: 28%
- Italy: 32%
- Germany: 34%
- OECD average: 42%
- U.S.: 45%
- France: 48%
- Belgium: 50%
- Ireland: 56%
- Israel: 58%
- Norway: 58%
- Spain: 66%
- Canada: 81%
Excess Mortality?

- NYC: 4.1x higher mortality from March-May 2020 vs. 2019
- Detroit: 2.2x higher in March-May 2020 vs. 2019

Source: Barnett et al., 2020 JAMA
Federal data?

Missing Data

Pre-May 8th?

5% not yet reporting

Error

Entry errors

Processing errors
Efforts to Stem COVID

- Most nursing homes are in lockdown
- No visitors
- No communal dining/activities
- Taking staff temperatures at start of shift
Case Study of a Mass. SNF with No Symptomatic Cases on April 1st

- 30 residents had died by April 15th
- Serology tests largely negative for residents (80%) and staff (95%)
Staff?

- Limited PPE & testing
- 66K confirmed cases & 64K suspected cases
- 500 staff deaths
- Limited hazard pay, benefits, sick leave, etc.
Most Dangerous Job in America?

1) Logging = 97.6 per 100,000 workers

2) Fishermen = 77.4 per 100,000 workers

200 deaths per 100,000 nursing home workers
Tough on SNFs Financially

Source: Barnett et al., 2020 JAMA
“A Crisis on Top of a Crisis”

- Low Medicaid reimbursement
- Poor staffing, infection control, etc.
- Clinicians “missing in action”
- Ineffective regulatory model
- Lack of quality transparency
- Fragmented ownership structures
Who is to “blame” for nursing home outbreaks?

- Specific nursing homes
- State policies
- National (system-level) approach
Which Facilities Have COVID Cases?

- Facilities with cases **were not**:
  - Higher rated on NH Compare five-star
  - More likely to have prior infection violation
  - For-profit
  - Chain
  - High Medicaid

- Where you are, not who you are…

Source: Abrams et al., 2020 JAGS

Source: WSJ, 6/1/20
COVID Deaths in Community Mirror Deaths in SNF

A. Total weekly deaths from COVID-19 in the metropolitan areas

B. Trends in weekly rates of in-facility deaths per 1000 skilled nursing facility (SNF) residents

Source: Barnett et al., 2020 JAMA
Federal Data Suggest Cases Are Largely Flat by Star Status

COVID-19 and star ratings
Confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases for residents only and residents and staff, as a percentage of the number of occupied beds, by CMS star rating for health inspections

The chart below is interactive: click or touch to see more.

Source: Modern Healthcare 6/9/20
System-level problem in need of system-level solutions

- COVID Testing for staff & residents
  - Universal testing states: CT, MD, NY, TX, WV
  - Strike team states: AR, OK, RI, TN, UT
- PPE & infection control
- Workforce support
- Cohorting
- Invest in Medicaid HCBS
- Transparency for families & other stakeholders
- Post-acute preparedness
What we should do?

▪ Test everyone leaving hospital
▪ Create specialized covid-only settings
  – Existing facilities (all or units)
  – Retrofit closed facilities
  – Convention centers/arenas
▪ Invest in home-based care where possible
▪ Support the workforce
  – PPE, paid sick leave, etc.
Reopening Nursing Homes?

**MASSACHUSETTS**

**Effective June 3:** Long-term-care facilities could host outdoor visits.
**Restrictions include:** Visitors limited to two at a time, are screened for symptoms, stay at least 6 feet from resident, and wear masks.

**Covid-19 in long-term-care facilities:**
- Cases: 22,795
- Deaths: 4,817

**INDIANA**

**Effective June 4:** Long-term-care facilities could allow outdoor visits if they and their communities met certain criteria.
**Restrictions include:** Visitors are screened and must wear face coverings. Visitation spaces must allow for at least 6 feet of social distancing.

**Covid-19 in long-term-care facilities:**
- Cases: 4,942
- Deaths: 1,082

**OHIO**

**Effective June 8:** Assisted living facilities and facilities for people with developmental disabilities could allow outdoor visits.
**Restrictions include:** Visitors are screened and must wear masks. Contact-free visits are encouraged. If contact occurs, resident should wash hands and if possible change clothes.

**Covid-19 in long-term-care facilities:**
- Cases: 9,533
- Deaths: 1,745

**OKLAHOMA**

**Effective June 15:** Long-term-care facilities begin phased reopening, meeting certain requirements to advance to the next phase.
**Restrictions include:** Limited regular visits allowed in phase three, outdoor preferred. Facilities screen visitors and have policies on issues including use of personal protective equipment.

**Covid-19 in long-term-care facilities:**
- Cases: 1,571
- Deaths: 194

Note: States do not have uniform methods for counting long-term-care facility deaths.
Source: State health departments
Future Research Opportunities

- Medicare claims/MDS will facilitate national analysis of mortality, spending, utilization, quality
- PBJ data will allow examination of staffing for Q2, 2020
- Focused studies of:
  - Visitation
  - Testing
  - PPE
  - Other policies, interventions
Thanks!

Questions?