

Rapid Response Team for Long-Term Care Facilities

SARS-CoV-2 2019

Treasure Valley, Idaho

Background

Appropriate response to COVID-19 outbreaks in long-term care facilities (LTCF) requires the collaboration of multiple partners to ensure the health and safety of long-term care facility residents and staff. LTCFs have implemented multiple measures to prevent the introduction of SARS-CoV-2 into the facilities. Despite these measures, outbreaks continue to occur. Collaboration with community partners to support a rapid and aggressive response within LTCF may help reduce the impact of outbreaks when they occur. Early in the COVID-19 pandemic, South Central Public Health District in Idaho collaborated with St. Luke's Health System to create a rapid response team (RRT) to help support a LTCF outbreak response. The model proposed here builds upon that work to provide a framework for RRTs in other public health districts.

Purpose

The purpose of the Rapid Response Team (RRT) is to support Long-Term Care Facilities (LTCF) in preparing for and responding to a COVID-19 outbreak within their facility. The RRT convenes at the request of the facility but is facilitated by their local public health district. While preparation must occur in advance of an outbreak, the specific members of the RRT (representing the long-term care facility itself, the public health district, the local hospital, local EMS agency, etc) may not be identified until an outbreak occurs.

Goals

1. Prevent or mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in long term care facilities
2. Support LTCFs with local guidance, resource support (test kits, test submissions, PPE, staffing solutions, etc.), best practices, and protocols for patient management and transport
3. Remove barriers that may impede patient care management
4. Share and collaborate on best practices, gaps in protocols, and overall understanding of COVID-19 impact on healthcare systems

RRT Membership

Name	Agency	Title
Natalie Bodine	Central District Health	Program Manager
Kim Link	Central District Health	Program Manager
Zack Ward	Central District Health	Training/Exercise Coordinator
Joe Antonucci	Central District Health	Environmental Health Specialist
Ricky Bowman	Southwest District Health	Program Manager
Ellie Morgan	Southwest District Health	Staff Epidemiologist
Nolan Hoffer	St Luke's Health System	Senior Director
Dr. Vic Kadyan	St Luke's Health System	Multispecialty Medical Director
Jodi Vanderpool	St Luke's Health System	VP, Quality Operations
Dr. Alejandro Necochea	St Luke's Health System	SLHP Medical Director
Dr. Marcia Witte	IDHW – Division of Public Health	Public Health Physician
Dr. Sheila Giffen	St Alphonsus Health System	Executive Medical Director
Connie Lowder	Comagine Health	Improvement Advisor
Robert Van De Merwe	Idaho Healthcare Association	Executive Director
Cameo Akins	Ada County Paramedics	Training Captain
Dina Hardaway	Ada County Paramedics	Training Captain
Tamara Prisock	IDHW – Licensing and Certification	Supervisor, Skilled Nursing Facilities
Jamie Simpson	IDHW – Licensing and Certification	Supervisor, Residential and Assisted Living Facilities

Response Structure

It is anticipated that the RRT response structure will be comprised of three phases: Preparation, Activation, and Ongoing Monitoring and Support. The roles and responsibilities of the RRT members are delineated in the table, below.

Phase 1: Preparation

1. Leverage education, training and resources to help prevent introduction of SARS-COV-2 into LTCF.
2. Ensure active, daily routine surveillance with low threshold for testing for COVID-19
3. Develop plan to respond promptly and prevent further spread in the event of a COVID-19 infection among staff or residents.

Phase 2: Activation

1. Coordinated approach to respond promptly to confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases within long-term care facilities
2. Evaluate and isolate/cohort residents
3. Initiate testing per current testing guidance
4. Secure adequate PPE for staff to use with all residents on affected unit regardless of symptoms or diagnosis
5. Establish plan for ongoing support and monitoring.

Phase 3: Ongoing Monitoring and Support

1. Coordinated approach to support facilities with COVID-19 positive residents or staff until outbreak has been declared resolved.

Roles and Responsibilities, by Phase

Stakeholder	Phase 1: Preparation	Phase 2: Activation	Phase 3: Monitoring
Facility (Administrator, Director of Nursing, Medical Director, if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish network of contacts with other RRT members. • Utilize existing guidance to prepare for COVID-19 including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - infection prevention plan - PPE procurement - testing protocol - staffing plan • Determine at facility level if isolation and cohorting of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediately contact public health district epidemiologist for suspected or confirmed COVID-19 among residents or confirmed COVID-19 case among staff. • Request activation of RRT if any needs are identified related to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Testing - PPE - Infection Prevention education 	Continue regular contact with PHD POCs and with L&C regarding outbreak, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing resource needs - Testing plan (e.g., ongoing universal testing until cases no longer identified) - Cohorting plan

	<p>suspected or confirmed COVID-19 residents is possible, or if transfer will be required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine (if any) other LTCFs can accept stable COVID-19+ individuals who do not require hospitalization • Identify resource and other gaps (e.g., infection prevention education) and utilize contacts on RRT to help address gaps • Communicate with families about facility plan in case of COVID-19 outbreak; work with residents' primary care physicians to ensure advance directive (including POST) is established for each patient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transfer or movement of residents to ensure appropriate cohorting - Staff shortages that cannot be mitigated by internal staffing plan 	
<p>Public Health District Communicable Disease Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish POC and network of contacts with other team members • Review LTCF guidance (CDC, CMS, DHW) • Provide education (either directly or by identifying infection prevention specialist) on infection prevention as needed • Assist with development of testing protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with PHD preparedness program regarding testing (supplies, specimen collection, lab capacity) • Coordinate with L&C for list of approved COVID+ temporary care locations, other than hospitals • Work with facility to determine close contacts of cases and establish approach for further testing per current testing guidance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide ongoing monitoring and support during outbreak • Provide guidance regarding testing plan • Review cohorting plan, if requested • Help coordinate response to resource needs • Ongoing communication and coordination with state-level epidemiologist

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate access to infection prevention specialist 	
Public Health District preparedness program (Name, contact #)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish POC and network of contacts with other team members • Provide education and access to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - testing supplies - specimen collection - PPE • Consider developing mobile testing unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene RRT at LTCF request by identifying specific members of team, facilitating initial bridge call if necessary, and coordinating ongoing response • Work with PHD epidemiology program to assist with procuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Testing supplies - Access to specimen collection and lab testing - PPE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene conference calls as needed with RRT members • Assist with implementation of testing plan • Help coordinate response to resource needs
EMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish POC and network of contacts with other team members • Support options of establishing mobile testing unit • Support education of transferring non-emergent residents to alternative location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond as needed for emergent transfer of patients • Assist with connecting private/commercial transport agencies with transfer of non-emergent patients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support, as needed, with Patient Transport (guidance, resources, education).
Local hospital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish POC and network of contacts with other team members • Consider ability to assist with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Infection prevention education - Urgent PPE needs • Emergent staffing needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support as able to assist with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Infection prevention education - PPE - Testing (lab capacity) - Emergent staffing needs • Coordinate acceptance of any resident who cannot be cared for in LTCF or temporary care location, to protect health and safety of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As able, provide ongoing support regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Infection prevention education - PPE - Testing (lab capacity) - Emergent staffing needs - Patient transfer/acceptance • Participate in RRT conference calls as needed

		<p>that resident and other residents/staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist with palliative care referrals with residents not desiring hospital-level care 	
Division of Licensing and Certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminate guidance developed by LTCF strike team and RRT members Host calls with LTCFs to review guidance, assess resource needs, share challenges, problem-solve Represent facilities on LTCF strike team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in RRT conference calls, as needed Provide guidance regarding temporary care locations Provide guidance to RRT regarding licensing requirements, flexibilities 	<p>Provide ongoing support and information regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Licensing requirements and flexibilities
State level epidemiologist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review LTCF guidance (CDC, CMS, DHW) Provide education on infection prevention as needed Assist with development of testing protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in RRT initial bridge call Provide assistance with implementing testing protocol (e.g., secure IBL testing approval, supporting testing supply acquisition, etc.) Support PHD epidemiologist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide ongoing monitoring and support to the PHDs Participate in RRT conference calls as needed
Idaho Healthcare Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help facilities understand their responsibilities Help stakeholders understand facility capabilities Facilitate communication between facilities and stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help share information with facilities Help share facility concerns and limitations with stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate navigating bottlenecks in the system
CoMagine Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spread CMS and CDC communications with the facilities Provide education materials and opportunities to help facilities prepare and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Infection Prevention Technical Assistance Provide access to educational opportunities to assist facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue Technical Assistance and educational opportunities Provide ongoing Technical Assistance

	<p>remain prepared for COVID-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate communication between facilities and Federal and State stakeholders • Offer Technical Assistance with establishing and maintaining a Telehealth program - Facilitate access to Department of Health and Welfare for participation in their telehealth project 	<p>maintain and improve staff skills for caring for COVID-19 residents</p>	<p>with maintaining a Telehealth program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assistance with QAPI documentation
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RRT Contact Information

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