



State of Louisiana
Louisiana Department of Health
Health Standards Section

TO: Long Term Care Facilities

FROM: Cecile Castello, RN
Deputy Assistant Secretary, Health Standards Section

DATE: August 10, 2020

SUBJECT: FAQ Long Term Care Facility residents going off-site to hemodialysis

Please see the attached Office of Public Health – Epidemiology FAQ regarding LTC residents receiving hemodialysis at off-site locations and additional recommendations regarding healthcare prevention and control. If you have any further questions regarding the attached memo, please contact OPH at 211 or your regional OPH office.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Cecile Castello".

Cecile Castello BSN, RN
Deputy Assistant Secretary, Health Standards Section

Section: Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control FAQs for COVID-19

Question

- Should long-term care residents who go off-site for hemodialysis automatically be placed in COVID-19 care units upon return to the facility?

Answer

No, residents who go off-site for hemodialysis should not be placed in a COVID-19 care unit when they return from dialysis. The COVID-19 care unit is a dedicated space in the LTCF for housing and managing residents with **confirmed** COVID-19. Placing residents who return from dialysis in a dedicated COVID care unit could put them at higher risk of exposure to COVID-19.

Question

- Should long-term care residents who go off-site for hemodialysis automatically be placed in a separate observation area or placed in quarantine upon return to the facility?

Answer

No, current CDC guidance does not recommend residents who go off-site for hemodialysis be considered new admissions and placed in a separate observation area in the long-term care facility (LTCF). The observation area is for managing new admissions and readmissions with unknown COVID-19 exposure status during a 14-day quarantine so residents can be monitored for evidence of COVID-19.

Because of their regular need to leave the facility, residents receiving hemodialysis or other off-site treatments will have prolonged stays in quarantine or observation as long as COVID-19 restrictions are in place. The potential benefit of placing residents into quarantine or observation to reduce risk for COVID-19 introduction must be weighed with the disruptions from extended isolation and the removal from their usual living arrangement. In addition, facilities who opt to place residents receiving off-site hemodialysis in an observation area must ensure they are not housed with an individual who could put them at higher risk of exposure to COVID-19.

Additional recommendations:

- Residents should wear a cloth face covering or facemask (if tolerated) whenever they leave their room, including for procedures outside the facility such as hemodialysis
- Regular communication between the dialysis facilities and the LTCFs (in both directions) is essential to help identify patients with fever or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 before they enter the facilities and facilitate resident's care.
- Social distancing measures should be implemented, such as minimizing movement of these residents within the facility as much as possible.
- LTCFs should comply with the [infection prevention and control guidance for nursing homes and LTCFs](#).