



For Immediate Release:

## **AAPACN Responds to CMS Reopen Guidance, Stresses Urgent Need for More Support**

Denver, CO, May 20, 2020 – In response to the release of guidelines for the reopening of nursing homes across the country, the American Association of Post-Acute Care Nursing (AAPACN) urges the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), together with state and local governments, to provide clear guidance, additional clarification, and all necessary resources to support skilled nursing homes and to protect the health and safety of staff and residents.

At a time when nursing homes across America are still struggling to obtain adequate personal protective equipment and COVID-19 testing for residents and staff to safely provide care, AAPACN believes the CMS guidance fails to address the nationwide shortages of such resources. Further, the guidance does not address factors such as cost of testing and supplies needed to meet the recommendations. Finally, the CMS recommendations lack guidance on significant issues of concern such as refusals of residents, staff, and visitors to adhere to the recommendations.

Responding to the guidelines, AAPACN President and CEO Tracey Moorhead commented, “America’s nursing homes were never ‘closed.’ They have been operating under tremendous strains and have continued to accept and care for patients but with limited staff and a severe lack of resources. They don’t need recommendations for how to ‘reopen’ but, rather, they need clear, comprehensive guidance and assurances that all necessary resources will be provided or available. To date, this has not been the case.”

Most urgently, AAPACN urges CMS and state officials to provide immediate support to skilled nursing facilities in the form of adequate personal protective equipment to meet regulatory requirements for all staff and residents and reimbursement for such equipment; and testing supplies for all staff and residents and reimbursement for the costs of acquiring supplies and processing samples.

In response to the guidance, AAPACN will work with CMS and other stakeholders to obtain clarification on issues related to testing, staffing, billing, reimbursement, and the use of personal protective equipment, among other issues. Finally, AAPACN will advocate for a facility-by-facility decision-making process under these or any additional guidelines.

AAPACN has responded to the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic by providing free tools and resources to support nursing professionals in skilled nursing and other post-acute care settings. These tools and resources have been developed to support the safety of both nursing leaders and facility residents as well as to streamline compliance and reporting during this unprecedented health crisis. AAPACN has also provided guidance to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on the development of forthcoming *Crisis Standards of Care* and other responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. We will continue to work with all stakeholders in support of skilled nursing professionals and the residents they care for.

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#### [About AAPACN](#)

The American Association of Post-Acute Nursing (AAPACN) represents more than 17,000 long-term and post-acute care nurses and professionals through its subsidiary associations, the American Association of Nurse Assessment Coordination ([AANAC](#)) and the American Association of Directors of Nursing Services ([AADNS](#)). Dedicated to supporting LTPAC nurses and healthcare professionals in providing quality care, AAPACN offers members best in-class education, certification, resources, and strong collaborative communities.

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