



March 2024

Dear Nursing Home Administrator,

The Maryland Health Care Commission collected health care worker (HCW) influenza vaccination data from nursing homes from 2010 through 2023 for public reporting purposes. Per Annotated Code of Maryland, Health – General §§ 18-404, health care facilities in Maryland are required each flu season to:

- determine all employee's status for influenza immunization;
- provide or arrange for an immunization;
- document the annual immunization against influenza virus received by each employee; and
- document any refusal and the reason for the refusal.

Beginning with the 2022-2023 flu season, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) required nursing homes to report HCW flu vaccination data to CMS via the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) surveillance system. As a result of this new federal requirement, MHCC will discontinue the administration of the separate MHCC flu survey for the 2023-2024 flu season.

MHCC continues to require the reporting of HCW flu vaccination data for all Maryland nursing homes:

- **Final data for the current flu season (October 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024) should be entered into NHSN between April 1 and May 15, 2024.**
- **Log onto NHSN when you receive this letter, to ensure that your facility can access the system.**

In lieu of a separate survey, staff will now access the HCW flu data directly from NHSN for public reporting. These results will also be shared with the Maryland Medicaid Pay for Performance program.

NHSN Instructions

Have your NHSN facility administrator log onto NHSN to confirm your account is active.

In order for MHCC to access your data, the **NHSN facility administrator** must join the MDH group then confer rights. Please see the attached instructions for a step-by-step guide.

Group ID: 44030

Group Joining Password: Mhcc2@24

Public Reporting

The results of the vaccination data are posted on the Commission's Maryland Quality Reports [website](#) and are used by consumers to choose a suitable place for family and friends needing care. These results will also be forwarded to the Maryland Medicaid Pay for Performance program.

MHCC will pull the HCW Influenza report directly from NHSN on **May 15**. Facilities will have 4 weeks to review and/or make changes before the results are published on the website and forwarded to the Medicaid Pay for Performance program.

Imposition of Fines Under COMAR Authority

As a reminder, COMAR 10.24.03 specifically provides: "long term care providers . . . shall submit accurate, timely and complete data required by the Commission." COMAR 10.25.12 specifically provides that: "a party that fails to timely file a report or other information required by the Commission may be liable for a monetary penalty, **not to exceed \$1,000 per day**, for each day the filing of the report is past due." Fines are not something the Commission wants to impose, but time is of the essence in gathering timely survey information.

Questions?

We want to make this process as smooth as possible. Please contact Stacy Howes (stacy.howes@maryland.gov) or Julie Beard (julie.beard@maryland.gov) at the Maryland Health Care Commission if we can help with this process.

We thank you for supporting this important effort.

Sincerely,



Stacy Howes
Chief of Long Term Care and Health Plan Quality Initiatives



Julie Beard
Program Manager of Long Term Care Quality Initiatives

www.healthcarequality.mhcc.maryland.gov

