



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
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Memorandum

January 6, 2022

Dear Skilled Nursing Facility Colleagues,

The Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EHS) and Department of Public Health (DPH) are keenly aware of the staffing challenges that exist within your facilities as well as across the health care delivery system. In order to create bed availability for individuals who need hospital level of care and better utilize SNF resources, we are announcing a temporary program that adds short-term rehabilitation capacity in all regions of Massachusetts. DPH/EHS will identify a SNF in each Emergency Medical Service region and utilize state-contracted nursing teams to augment existing SNF infrastructure and staffing. The state-contracted nursing teams will support the SNF for a minimum of four weeks. The goal of this program is to support patient care transitions and reduce the number of patients who are medically ready for hospital discharge but unable to be transferred due to unavailable capacity.

Participating SNFs must:

- Have at least 15 open short-term rehab beds available and be willing to take hospital discharges regardless of payer type as of January 15, 2022.
- Provide at least 50% of the nursing staff hours for short-term rehab unit (i.e., rehab unit must currently be open, with census and nursing staff).
- Provide all other services (i.e. dietary, housekeeping, maintenance, physical therapy and social work) as well as all facility leadership.
- Be responsible for billing and collections.

If your SNF is interested in participating and meets the following criteria, then please email dph.bhcsq@mass.gov and share the contact information of the facility's designated point person no later than Friday, January 7, 2022 at 5 pm. DPH/EHS will review the SNFs who submit their interest and follow up with SNFs next week regarding next steps for those facilities who are selected.

In addition to the requirements for participation described above, SNFs must meet the following criteria:

- Have a Care Compare (CMS) star rating of 4 or 5 *and* a Nursing Home Survey Performance Tool Score (DPH) of 120 or higher.
- Currently operating an established short-term rehabilitation unit and history of admitting short-term rehabilitation patients from hospitals.
- Non-discriminatory based on payment structure and must be willing to accept any hospital referrals for which there is an available bed that meet skilled nursing level of care criteria.

- Agree to maintain beds open for a minimum of six months following departure of the state-supported staffing team.

Thank you for your continued to support your residents, staff and communities during this public health emergency,

The Department of Public Health