The Impact of COVID in Older Adults and People with Disabilities: 
Focus on Nursing Homes and Congregate Settings

Anna H. Chodos, MD. MPH  
Associate Professor of Medicine  
Division of Geriatrics, UCSF and Division of General Internal Medicine, ZSFG  
Medical Lead, Skilled Nursing Home Outbreak Response, San Francisco COVID-19 Command Center

LTCCC  
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SAN FRANCISCO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
Outline

• Impact of COVID on older adults
• Our city’s response in the community, at RCFEs and SNFs
• Current city policy and guidance
• Balancing physical and mental health needs of older adults and people with disabilities
Impact on older adults: Cases

Cases: 13% are in people 61+

https://data.sfgov.org/stories/s/w6za-6st8
As of 11/8/20
Impact on older adults: Deaths

https://data.sfgov.org/stories/s/w6za-6st8
As of 11/8/20

Deaths: 88% are in people 61+
Turning to congregate settings: Why might residents be vulnerable to COVID?

- Older age
- Multimorbid
- Functional disability: need for hands on care

Why might a **congregate setting** be vulnerable to COVID?

- Small, crowded rooms
- Care providers see many residents in a shift
- Chronic staff shortages
- PPE use (access, proper use)
- Infection control and quality of care

Community Spread is SNF spread

cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/SNFsCOVID_19.aspx
In California, SNF residents are:

1% of pop -> 2.3% of cases -> 26% of deaths

**California**
TOTAL CASES: 984K
TOTAL DEATHS: 18,060

**SNF RESIDENTS**
28,250 cases
4779 deaths

data.cms.gov/stories/s/bkwz-xpvg
cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/ncov2019.aspx
SF SNF Dashboard

**Cumulative SNF Resident Cases**

- Total Resident Cases: 207

**Cumulative SNF Resident Deaths**

- Total Resident Deaths: 33

What percent of all SF COVID cases were among SNF residents? 1.6%

What percent of all SF COVID deaths were among SNF residents? 22%
6.7% of state’s total deaths

Figure 1: Graph of Cumulative Cases in RCFEs by County*
RCFE Cases and Deaths in SF

- Total cases: 129
- Total deaths: 27 (19% of total)
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Role of the local and state health depts

“All global pandemics are local.”

- Licensing agencies heavily involved
- The local health department:
  - Tracking COVID cases
  - Setting up testing
  - Contact tracing
  - Local resources and guidance for outbreak
  - Setting relevant policy and health orders, publishing information
San Francisco’s SNFs and RCFEs

• **20 Skilled Nursing Facilities**
  • Laguna Honda, 800 bed capacity
  • VA facility (CLC)
  • Total: 2500 resident capacity, 4500 staff

• **98 Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly, Adult Residential Facilities, Residential Care Facilities for the Chronically Ill**
  • ~2000 residents (3500 capacity) and 1900 staff

• *Includes 5 Continuing Care Facilities* (have RCFE + SNF + independent living)
Support for sites in the CCC

For all: **medical branch** for resources, equipment, staffing

- **RCFE, ARF, RCFCI:**
  - Prevention:
    - Senior Sites, Community Hub
    - seniorsites@sfdph.org
  - Outbreak: OMG

- **SNFs:**
  - OMG has been doing prevention and outbreak work
    - 1 RN lead for each site
  - Med Branch holds weekly informational meetings on policy and news for SNFs.
Senior Sites: RCFEs, ARFs, RCFCIs

- Has completed sites visits to all facilities!
- Includes Behavioral Health and DAS, Geriatrics
  - Good representation of people advocating for older people and those with disabilities
- Shares information with sites serving people with more BH residents
- Weekly meetings with: GGRC, Ombudsman, MOHCD, DPH Transitions team
- Promoted SDAs “Get out the vote” initiative in facilities
Overarching Framework for COVID-19 Response for Congregate Facilities: The Quadruple Aim

1. Infection Control
   • Full Time “Infection preventionist” at all SNFs - now law!

2. Access to sufficient PPE

3. Readily available testing and universal testing of all staff

4. Nursing homes activate an emergency response plan and operate in an incident commander mode now = leadership
   • CDSS released a call to create a registry of temporary RCFE managers

www.caltcm.org  California Association of Long Term Care Medicine, April 2020
Testing

• SNFs:
  • All residents have been tested “at baseline”
  • Screening all health care workers once a week since early September due to CDPH requirements
    • Given “point of care” tests by Center for Medicare and Medicaid services
  • Response driven or entire facility if there is a case depending on the circumstances

• RCFEs: (CDSS licensed facilities)
  • 25% of staff every 14 days
  • Response driven or entire facility if there is a case depending on the circumstances
The Ground-level Framework: Prevention-Mitigation-Outbreak

Prevention

Case Mitigation

Outbreak

Infection control, support for residents, support for staff

Outbreak = 1+ resident or ≥3 staff
What have been the causes and challenges of some of our outbreaks?

• Early on: Inconsistent testing, low/no PPE

• Now:
  • Higher community prevalence
  • Staff not distancing outside of or at work
    • Carpooling, breakrooms, get togethers
  • People working with symptoms
  • Leadership and staffing strain
July 27, 2020

How SF’s Laguna Honda averted coronavirus disaster

State, feds stepped in with training, protocols and action plan for largest nursing home in California

Story by Sarah Ravani | July 27, 2020
Photos by Gabrielle Lurie

They have had NO deaths.
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San Francisco Health Orders limiting visitation:
• 3/7/20- No visitors in Laguna Honda Hospital
• 3/10/20- No visitors to all SNFs (a unit at ZSFG was added 3/11)
• 3/16/20- Shelter-in-Place
• 3/18/20- No visitors RCFEs
• March-June: very limited activities, people in their rooms
• 8/31/20- Guidance for limited indoor activities in RCFE
• 9/5/20- Allow outdoor and window visitation
Visitor rules: Updated September 4

**General Visitor Rules for Hospitals** C19-06b
**Residential Care Facilities** C19-09b
**Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs)** C19-03b
**ZSFGH and LHH** C19-01c

These Orders collectively address rules for visitors and others where vulnerable persons reside. C19-01, C19-03 and C19-09 are also available in 14 point font: ZSFGH and LHH | SNFs | ARFs and RCFEs

**Guidance and FAQ for Visits, Dining and Activities** (pdf) also web page

**中文 | Filipino | Español | Русский**

One page Guidance for visitors: **中文 | Filipino | Español | Русский**

RCFE FAQs: **中文 | Filipino | Español | Русский**

sfdph.org/dph/alerts/coronavirus-healthorders.asp
Frequently Asked Questions About COVID-19

Who is at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19? Which groups need to take extra precautions?

What can I do to protect myself if I am at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 or at higher risk of getting exposed to COVID-19?

First, follow all the advice on “How can people reduce their risk of getting sick and prevent the spread of COVID-19?” In addition to those important steps, if you are at higher risk of severe COVID-19 illness (see Who is at higher risk?), or must be in higher risk situations like being indoors around people who are unmasked (such as in restaurants or public transit), you may want to consider these 4 extra precautions: 1) wearing eye protection in addition to a mask, 2) wearing an N95 respirator (also called an N95 mask) instead of a cloth face mask, 3) wearing a mask at home and asking others in your household to wear a mask at home, and 4) getting a flu shot and staying up to date on vaccinations.

sfcdcp.org
Long Term Care and Senior Care

- **Guidance About In-person Visits, Communal Dining and Resident Activities** (UPDATE: 9/6/2020) [Chinese] [Spanish] [Tagalog] [Russian]
- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Residential Care Facilities for Adults and Seniors** (UPDATE: 9/6/2020) [Chinese] [Spanish] [Tagalog] [Russian]
- **COVID-19 Preparedness and Management Toolkit for Skilled Nursing Facilities** (SFDPH, Updated 5/27/2020)
- **Instructions for Discharge of Transfer of Patients with COVID-19 to SNFs** (SFDPH, 4/30/2020)
- **Interim Guidance: Prevention and Management of COVID-19 in Long-Term Care Facilities** (SFDPH, Updated 10/27/2020)

Get help for seniors and people with disabilities

Resources for home care, transportation, and community connections during the coronavirus pandemic.

sf.gov/information/get-help-seniors-and-people-disabilities
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The total toll of COVID

- Social isolation and related decline is a serious concern
- Behavioral concerns in residents
- Visitation and opening up activities vs. controlling COVID
  - Older adults in facilities more likely to be harmed in all scenarios

Bay Area seniors struggle with loneliness as pandemic drags on: ‘It’s four walls and a TV’

Status of Visitation in SNFs and RCFEs

- Window: always permissible
- Outdoor: permissible, but need to have no case in 14 days
- Indoor: *new orders being prepared to allow this*
Next hurdles

- Implementation of Vaccine
- Twindemic

JAMA 10/28/20
Thank you!

Anna.chodos@ucsf.edu