



Task Force on Long Term Care

August 11, 2020, 1:00 PM

Governor's 8th Floor Conference Room

1700 West Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85007

A general meeting of the Task Force on Long Term Care was convened on August 11, 2020,
via

Zoom and at the Governor's 8th Floor Conference Room at 1700 W. Washington, Phoenix,
Arizona 85007, notice having been duly given.

I. Call to Order

- A. Christina Corieri, Chair**, called the Task Force on Long Term Care to order at 1:02 p.m. with all thirty (30) members and two (2) staff members present.

II. Roll Call

- A. Christina Corieri, Chair**, welcomed everyone that had joined Zoom and on the public call-in line. **Ms. Corieri** welcomed two individuals that did not get to introduce themselves last week, **Ms. Rosie Abad, Archie Hendricks Sr. Skilled Nursing Facility**, and **Ms. Tonsa Price-Edwards, family member**, and allowed them to briefly share their goals.
- B. Ms. Rosie Abad, Archie Hendricks Sr. Skilled Nursing Facility**, discussed her perspective as both a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and as an administrator. Among many roles, she represents the perspective of the Tohono O'odham Nation. **Ms. Abad** believes that there should be standardized guidelines that allow providers to make the best decisions for reopening visitation while ensuring that residents and staff members are safe in COVID-19-free facilities.
- C. Ms. Tonsa Price-Edwards, family member**, is looking forward to contributing as a family member and bringing in her experience to recommend safe opening guidelines.

III. Approval of Minutes

- A. Ms. Chistina Corieri, Chair**, requested a motion to approve the August 7, 2020, meeting minutes.
- B. Mr. Dave Voepel, CEO, Arizona Health Care Association**, motioned to accept the minutes as drafted. **Mr. Rocky McKay, President, Arizona Assisted Living Homes Association**, seconded the motion, and the motion passed with no dissenting votes.
- C. Ms. Chistina Corieri, Chair**, introduced the next two presentations given by **Mr. Colby Bower, Arizona Department of Health Services**, and **Tuesday Elias, Office of Governor Ducey**.

IV. Presenter: Mr. Colby Bower, Arizona Department of Health Services

Presentation: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recommendations

- A. Mr. Colby Bower, Arizona Department of Health Services**, introduced himself and thanked everyone for being on the call and will allow for questions and discussions at the end. **Mr. Bower** discussed the main outlines of the White House Gating Criteria and CMS guidelines. The White House Gating Criteria has a three-phased program for implementing visitation. Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) guidance is regarding visitation in skilled nursing facilities. Mr. Bower recommended that we could look at this on the local level, similar to the business opening guidance, and use data based on the county that they are located in. Mr. Bower's presentation can be found [HERE](#).
- V. Question & Answer and Discussion on Mr. Colby Bower's Presentation**, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recommendations:
- A. The Honorable Kate Brophy McGee, Arizona State Senator**, asked what is criteria related to testing turnaround times?
- 1. Mr. Bower** stated that this question has been in the media a lot and that DHS has seen a backlog in testing turnaround times. He explained that at the beginning of August, Sonora Quest Laboratories cleaned up their backlog and now DHS is looking at ~24-48 hours testing turnaround. **Mr. Bower** explained that facilities with rapid machine testing take only a few minutes to receive results. However, with those machines, there are higher false-negative results.
 - 2. Mr. Corieri** added that those machines are currently only approved for people who are symptomatic and not for those who are asymptomatic. She mentioned that ASU's turnaround time is ~36 hours. **Ms. Corieri** asked **Mr. Bower** to check to see what LabCorp's turnaround time was.
- B. Ms. Dana Kennedy, State Director, AARP Arizona**, asked what the capacity is for rapid testing and how readily available is that testing?
- 1. Ms. Corieri** explained that the machine is only approved for those who are symptomatic, at this time.
- C. Becky Hill, family member**, had a question for **Mr. Bower** in regard to flu-like symptoms. She gave a scenario where we see a decline with COVID-like symptoms, but a spike with flu cases. **Ms. Hill** asked, what does that mean for facilities and homes? She also posted in the Zoom chatbox, "Colby, I think the distinction we discussed was really related to settings, level of care, those with dementia, etc. I think most families would find visits "essential"."
- 1. Mr. Colby Bower** explained the White House Gating Criteria came out at the tail end of the flu season. He mentioned that flu-like symptoms are at about 4 percent and that as a state, we do recognize that flu season is coming. The White House Gating Criteria and CMS Criteria are heavily focused on having hospital capacity and they may be concerned about the flu season. In response, **Ms. Hill** stated that she would like to see the hospital's capacity be the trigger. **Mr. Bower** explained that the White House Gating Criteria did not define a time period for moving to the next phase. **Ms. Hill** asked if we (the task force) will be discussing the amount of time that constitutes a phase because 28 days seems long. **Ms. Christina Corieri, Chair**, added that schools and businesses have to hit all three metrics for two weeks and that in return, would allow them to

move to the next phase. She explained that this task force could do something similar.

2. **The Honorable Jennifer Longdon, Arizona State Representative**, agreed with Ms. Hill's remarks added that visiting is essential for both the resident and their loved ones.
3. **Mr. Scott McCutcheon, Chief Operating Officer, LivGenerations**, stated that all facilities (IL, AL, SNF) should be provided the machines for rapid testing. **Ms. Corieri** said that the presentation was to provide information and that this task force has the ability to draft guidance that is best for Arizona and its residents. **Mr. McCutcheon** stated that he would like to see Arizona in "phase three" and allow visits. He said that "we should not allow data to drive our decisions, we can safely do this."
4. **Ms. Donna Taylor, Chief Operating Officer, Spectrum Retirement**, stated that it is critical to broadly define "essential" if we choose to limit the visits.
5. **The Honorable Regina Cobb, Arizona State Representative**, asked if there were any facilities/homes that would be clear in all phases? **Ms. Corieri** explained that she cannot answer that unless the task force decided on criteria. She continued, explaining that there were several counties that met two of three phases within the school reopening guidance and many counties that were getting very close. **Ms. Corieri** also explained that businesses must be at 10% for two weeks and that there are two counties, Yavapai and La Paz, that have met that and a few that are close.

VI. Presenter: Tuesday Elias, Office of Governor Ducey

Presentation: Overview of states that have reopened long-term care facilities/homes

- A. **Ms. Tuesday Elias, Office of Governor Ducey**, introduced herself and thanked everyone for being on the call and will allow for questions and discussions at the end. **Ms. Elias** conducted research on what other states are doing in regard to outdoor and indoor visitation in care homes, facilities, and ICF's, alike. She gave a brief overview of what other states are doing as a means of comparison for the task force when moving forward for Arizona guidelines. **Ms. Elias'** presentation can be found [HERE](#).

VII. Question & Answer and Discussion on Ms. Tuesday Elias' Presentation:

- A. **The Honorable Jennifer Longdon, Arizona State Representative**, asked why there is an age difference? Why the 12 and younger? **Ms. Tuesday Elias** explained that many states had set an age limit for visitors while other states did not set an age limit. There was no elaboration on the "why" from the states that chose to do that.
- B. **The Honorable Joanne Osborne, Arizona State Representative**, inquired about state v. county numbers. She stated that we have a large county of Maricopa while other countries are very small. She recommended that we do not limit visitation by age and that she agrees with making appointments in advance. **Representative Osborne** wanted to understand the definition of "compassionate care" and would like the task force to take that into consideration.

- C. The Honorable Regina Cobb, Arizona State Representative**, shared that the facility requirements in the presentation were great ideas from the states but would like to see hospitals not refer patients that are COVID-positive back to their home/facility. She also would like to see decisions made on the county by county level and define what “essential” visitation is. **Representative Cobb** identified that even though there are standardizations, each state allows for individualization in the facilities and homes, which is what this task force needs to work towards. She agreed with her colleagues that 28 days, which is the CMS recommendation, is too long for a requirement. **Representative Cobb** asked **Mr. Colby Bower** to look into if each facility or home has to start over the 28-day timer each time someone becomes COVID-positive or not. **Ms. Corieri** added to the conversation discussing that rural Arizona is very different from urban Arizona and that there will be facilities that meet metrics at different times. If you were to determine metrics zip code by zip code, then you could have one home/facility across the street open and the other being closed. So she recommended that we do not go forth with splitting up guidance by zip codes.
- D. Ms. Becky Hill, family member**, said in the Zoom chat, “it was stated that Indoor Guidance is split between visits in residence rooms and a designated area. I’d definitely like to avoid a one or the other scenario. I would like to see my mom’s room for all the reasons discussed last week but I certainly don’t have to every time.” She also shared that the task force needs to recognize those who do not have the ability to self-report neglect. Many residents who live in facilities are not able to make proper decisions on their own and there is a zero-sum-game.
- E. The Honorable Jennifer Longdon, Arizona State Representative**, mentioned that there are other people, such as staff, going in and out of the facility daily. She stated that if staff can do that, then family members need to be able to abide by the same guidelines and be able to visit. **Representative Longdon** suggested that the task force split Maricopa County into sections. **Ms. Christina Corieri** said she would check if there could be a possible “east, west, central” split. **Mr. Colby Bower** spoke on behalf of his department, stating that for any other disease surveillance, they do not go any lower than the county. **Ms. Corieri** followed up saying that she would inquire with Maricopa County to ask if they have a standard breakdown. After that, the data will be brought back to her team to see if a reasonable breakdown is possible.
- F. Ms. Tonsa Price-Edwards, family member**, thanked Representative Cobb stating that she was wondering this same thing about starting the clock over. She agreed that 28 days is too long.
- G. Ms. Dana Kennedy, State Director, AARP Arizona**, stated that visitors are not the ones bringing COVID-19 in, it is often the staff or medical personnel.
- H. Ms. Christina Corieri, Chair**, asked the task force if they think that the guidance should be split between facilities, homes, ICFs, etc.
- I. Ms. Tonsa Price-Edwards, family member**, mentioned that trying to solve this globally, even though there are different variables, failure would be a one size fits all. She stated that facilities and homes have been responsible. **Ms. Corieri** added that some states have defined “compassionate care visits”.
- J. The Honorable Jennifer Longdon, Arizona State Representative**, recommended to the group that American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters need to be let into facilities/homes at all times.

- K. **Mr. Dave Voepel, CEO, Arizona Health Care Association**, appreciated Nebraska's plan and how they listed the breakdown of each phase per setting. He mentioned that you can still include the county, but still allow flexibility for the individual facilities and homes.
- L. **Ms. Christina Corieri, Chair**, asked for thoughts around health care providers, ombudsman, or other inspectors in the homes. **Ms. Becky Hill, family member**, said that those individuals must be a part of the solution. She explained that inspectors need to be able to come in to investigate and check on living spaces and health. **Mr. Colby Bower** stated that his team is still conducting regular inspections on about 25-35 facilities a week, in addition to the A-level complaint inspections. On the assisted living side, they are still having surveys be conducted. **Ms. Hill** asked **Mr. Bower** if case managers could come in. **Mr. Bower** said that he did not know and he would check on that with his team.
- M. **Mr. Mark Clark, President and CEO, Pima Council on Aging**, stated that his team is interested and hoping to get back into facilities soon. He mentioned that he is hoping to get more technology in homes for virtual communication.
- N. **Ms. Lisa Pollock, State Long Term Care Ombudsman, Arizona Department of Economic Security**, mentioned how her team is working on how to get ombudsmen back into the communities. However, they are not a replacement for a family member.
- O. **Ms. Rosie Abad, Archie Hendricks Sr. Skilled Nursing Facility**, stated that her staff is being tested every week in order to come into work.
- P. **The Honorable Jennifer Longdon, Arizona State Representative**, described the most recent Auditor General's report that came back about the lack of DHS's visitation in homes and facilities. She asked Mr. Bower if DHS would be able to accomplish a high volume of demand. **Mr. Bower** explained that CMS directed the states to stop that week-long survey that is under the current contract and pivot to high-level complaints. CMS's direction was to be in every facility by a certain narrow window. **Mr. Bower** stated that they have visited 150 facilities and given the infection control survey, which takes about a day to continue and is able to get many done a day. Representative Longdon responded, asking if inspectors are able to spot gross negligence or abuse. If they are in a position to act on that if they do. **Mr. Bower** stated that was a very legitimate concern, yes and no. He stated that increased surface activity does not replace an ombudsman or family member. However, members are able to submit a formal complaint and move forward with a citation if they did witness something. Although, their primary job is focused on infection control.
- Q. **Ms. Diane Drazenski, family member**, explained to the task force that it has taken months in order to get residents placed into facilities or homes because of the lockdown. With all of the security measures, Ms. Drazenski explained that residents are declining in their mental health.

VIII. Upcoming Meeting Dates

- A. **Ms. Christina Corieri, Chair**, asked members to send any comments to either Ms. Tuesday Elias or Ms. Grace Appelbe. Ms. Corieri said that she will be sitting down with members from DHS and draft recommendations that reflect the discussion. The goal is to bring the draft to the task force on Monday and for members to have a discussion on Tuesday.

- B. Next meeting will be Tuesday, August 18, 2020, at 1:00 p.m-2:30 pm. For members of the task force, Zoom information will be provided at a later time. Call in for the public is made available here:
<https://goyff.az.gov/meeting/lrcf/2020/08/11>

IX. Call to the Public

- A. **Ms. Christina Corieri, Chair**, reminded members on Zoom and within the public call line, that call to the public are written only, submitted here:
<https://goyff.az.gov/webform/written-public-comment>

- B. The following remarks were submitted on August 11, 2020, and have been redacted and summarized for confidentiality purposes:

- One family member expressed that they have not seen their mother since March and how that has had a rapid effect on both of their mental health. Their mom has Alzheimer's and has become very depressed and in return has threatened to take her own life. "We need to be able to visit our loved ones with the little time we have left with them! Please open the facilities for family members!" - *Joy Kessler*
- A member of the public has submitted a public comment and is requesting that the Task Force on Long Term Care acts with urgency in allowing families to access loved ones. They explained that they have sent a letter to both Dr. Christ and Governor Ducey expressing their concerns and providing recommendations. The facility that their loved one is in, has been in lock down since early March and have not been able to visit since then. She believes that she has lost her mother to isolation and not COVID-19. This member suggested that in-door visitation is the only option while Arizona remains hot through the next couple of months. "Please, let's give these family members the dignity of living their lives as other Arizonans are being asked to do - following public health guidelines for safely managing life during this pandemic. Thank you." - *Cindy Frazier*
- One family member expressed that they have not seen their parents since very early March and how difficult it has been since they used to see each other daily. They explained how it has affected their mental health and wellbeing. With the lockdown in place, the residents feel like they are in "jail or have done something wrong". Their health continues to decline because of it. They believe that measures should be in place and people will absolutely follow them in order to see their loved ones. They also mentioned that if a worker can go in and out, then families should be able to come as well. Not only to visit but to check on their living situation and wellbeing. This individual is severely concerned about their health and believes that their parents are being neglected and not given adequate care, food, and hygiene. "They need us and we need them. Please let us hug them again before it's too late. Thank you!" - *Kristin Harris and Vern Eaton*
- This public comment are from individuals that own a facility in the Glendale are. They have shared many of the same concerns as above. Additionally, "...the Governor's plan was to provide funding for the purchase of electronic

communication equipment to support virtual connection with family.” They would like to see where to find more information and how they can apply for this. -

Daniel Londonson

- *To apply for this grant, please go here:
https://gn.ecivis.com/GO/gn_redir/T/1n9r914ep3nfp*
 - *The Arizona Governor’s Office is publishing this notice to announce the availability of funds for the AZ Stay Connected Program, connecting vulnerable and at-risk Arizonans to loved ones during the COVID-19 outbreak. AZ Stay Connected Program will provide licensed skilled nursing facilities and Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF) a \$10,000 grant to purchase technology that will enhance and expand virtual visits or to pay for staff dedicated to assisting residents with virtual visitations and family engagement. COVID-19 has impacted every family, but remaining connected while we work to protect public health in Arizona remains critical. The program ensures Arizona families can stay connected while we protect at-risk populations living in care facilities from COVID-19.*
- A member of the public commented stating that it has been about 15 days since the Task Force on Long Term care has been formed. They would like to know what decisions are being made. They also expressed that if workers/staff can go in and out of the buildings, then family members should be able to as well. They mentioned that isolation has been an extremely important issue in the reason for health declining. - *Tamara Skiba*

X. Adjourn

A. Christina Corieri, Chair, called for adjournment at 2:23 p.m.

B. The Honorable Jennifer Longdon, Arizona State Representative, motioned to adjourn, **The Honorable Regina Cobb, Arizona State Representative**, seconded the motion, and the task force voted unanimously to adjourn.

Dated August 7, 2020
Task Force on Long Term Care
Submitted by Tuesday Elias
Policy Assistant, Office of Governor Doug Ducey