

CHARACTERISTICS AND QUALITY OF U.S. NURSING HOMES WITH COVID-19 CASES

COVID-19 has had a major impact on U.S. nursing homes, resulting in a large and disproportionate share of COVID-19 deaths. Starting in April 2020, nursing homes were required to report COVID-19 cases to their state health department. Linking these reports to Medicare quality data, the authors examined the characteristics of 8,943 nursing homes in 23 states and Washington, D.C. Using data collected between April 22 and 29, they described the differences between facilities that reported COVID-19 cases (34%) and those that did not report cases (66%).

■ Facilities with COVID-19

■ Facilities without COVID-19

COVID-19 rates were 2x as high in counties where facilities had COVID-19 cases

Counties that had facilities with COVID-19

428
per 100,000 population

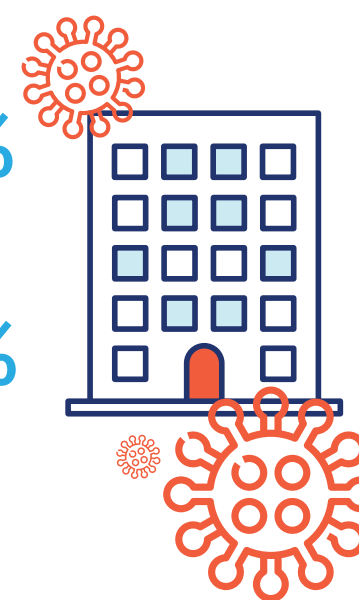
Counties that did not have facilities with COVID-19

231
per 100,000 population

Facilities with COVID-19 had more Medicaid-insured residents and were more often for-profit

59% vs. 57%
Medicaid-insured residents

79% vs. 69%
For-profit facilities



Facilities with COVID-19 had more deficiencies, but the same quality rating as facilities without COVID-19

67.0 vs. 56.2
health deficiencies

3.9 vs. 3.2
emergency preparedness deficiencies

3.2 ★★★★★
No difference in overall 5-star quality rating

COVID-19 has taken an enormous toll on U.S. nursing homes, particularly in areas with high case rates in the surrounding communities. Medicare's quality measures were unrelated to COVID-19 cases, but for-profit facilities and those with more Medicaid-insured residents had more COVID-19 cases, as did facilities with more deficiencies and complaints. Steps must be taken to protect vulnerable residents and staff from continued infections and future pandemics, in an industry reeling from years of declining revenues and financial instability.