



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Aging and Long-Term Support Administration
PO Box 45600, Olympia, Washington 98504-5600

October 31, 2022

AL TSA: ICF/IID #2022-024

**QSO-21-08-NLTC (REVISED) COVID-19 FOCUSED INFECTION CONTROL SURVEY
TOOL FOR ACUTE AND CONTINUING CARE PROVIDERS AND SUPPLIERS**

Dear ICF/IID Superintendent:

In response to the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE), the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) introduced the Focused Infection Control (FIC) survey tool. This FIC tool was introduced on March 23, 2020, through [QSO-20-20-All](#), and was updated on December 30, 2020, and again on February 4, 2022 via [QSO-21-08-NLTC REVISED](#). The survey was available to every provider in the country and was often used by providers to perform a voluntary self-assessment of their ability to meet infection control priorities during the time of crisis. CMS continues to encourage facilities to carefully review the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for updated changes and recommendations including:

- CDC Clean Hands Count for Safe Healthcare [here](#).
- Interim Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Recommendation for Healthcare Personnel during the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic [here](#).

On September 26, 2022, CMS again revised [QSO-21-08-NLTC](#) ending the use of the COVID-19 FIC survey tool. Based on stakeholder feedback and survey activity thus far, CMS found facilities have developed and incorporated COVID-19 management strategies into their infrastructure and operations. CMS affirmed there is no longer a need to continue the use of the FIC survey tool on a national or case-by-case basis because surveyors will continue to assess IPC through the standard survey process, as applicable to each provider type. Surveyors must no longer use the previous versions of the FIC survey tool and facilities should no longer use the tool for voluntary self-assessment of their ability to meet IPC priorities.

Additionally, CMS recognized that visitation restrictions and screening procedures have been used throughout the COVID-19 PHE, and while CMS guidance has focused on protecting patients and staff from COVID-19, they recognize restricting visitation has taken a physical and emotional toll. Currently, CMS is not issuing updated federal guidance on visitation. Facilities should continue to follow basic IPC principles for COVID-19 that are consistent with national standards of practice, including but not limited to, ensuring everyone is aware of IPC practices in the facility, and having a process so everyone entering the facility is aware of actions to prevent transmission to other. See Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic [here](#).

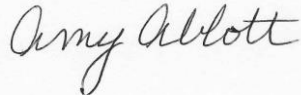
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Thank you for your continued commitment to resident health and safety. If you have any questions, please contact Debbie Hoeman, ICF/IID Policy Program Manager, at (360) 725-3210 or Debbie.Hoeman@dshs.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy Abbott". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Amy Abbott, Director
Residential Care Services

DSHS: *"Transforming Lives"*