



***Steven Hirsch & Associates***  
***Healthcare Management Support Systems***

**CMS Revised COVID-19 Checklist**

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The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) have updated the COVID-19 Focused Infection Control Survey Tool for Acute and Continuing Care. Completion of this tool can assist facilities in producing an effective self-assessment of the implementation of infection control standards at their organizations related to COVID-19.

This article is intended to provide an overview of the survey tool. The entire Revised COVID-19 Tool can be found in: QSO-21-08-NLTC which is available on the CMS Website: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-21-08-nltc.pdf>

The tool reflects current COVID-19 guidance updates, clarifies existing information and offers considerations if a citation is warranted, per the CMS Memorandum Summary. The tool can and should be used by healthcare facilities now for self-assessment and infection control education.

**Important Focal Points and updates from the survey tool include the following:**

- Facilities are to assess individuals entering their premises for signs, symptoms of COVID and for exposure to others with known or suspected COVID. It is suggested that the organization review the CDC recommendations to ensure that the screening is consistent with current guidance.
- Staff observance of standard precautions should be evaluated by the organization. The survey tool lists areas to be monitored.
- Hand hygiene is to be scrutinized in all locations of the organization. The survey tool identifies several areas requiring evaluation.
- Donning and doffing of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is included in the survey tool checklist as an area very important for evaluation and self-assessment.
- Aerosol Generating Procedures and associated PPE utilization is included in the survey tool checklist.
- The organization can and should determine whether appropriate transmission-based precautions, as reflected in the content of the checklist, are in effect and are effective in the organization.
- The implementation of a facility wide Infection Prevention and Control Program, policies and procedures as well as the surveillance plan and associated activities are included on the survey tool checklist.
- The survey tool checklist offers several areas to be evaluated related to COVID-19 education, monitoring and screening of staff.

- Staffing procedures in emergencies is included in the survey tool checklist. Policies and procedures on staffing and strategies to be implemented in a COVID-19 outbreak should be considered.
- Patient placement and isolation of patients are also addressed in the survey tool checklist. This area may be helpful in assessing patient placement practices and appropriateness of care provided to a known or suspected COVID-19 patient.
- Environmental cleaning and disinfection are so crucial to safe provision of care, and as such, are included in the survey tool checklist.

**Note:** The definition of staff in this survey tool includes employees, Medical Staff, consultants, volunteers, contract staff, and all others who provide care and services on behalf of the facility. This includes members of the Medical Staff.

Dialysis presents special considerations for hand hygiene, cleaning and disinfection as well as isolation requirements. Although the survey tool checklist specifies additional areas of review for dialysis facilities, many of the considerations on the survey tool checklist are applicable to acute care hospitals providing dialysis.

In conclusion, facilities are expected to be in compliance with all current requirements, regulations and CMS guidance that are implemented to help address the current COVID-19 pandemic. The use of this checklist may help identify areas that could be improved in meeting current standards for care and safety.

**Should you need assistance with the COVID-19 Focused Infection Control Survey Tool for Acute and Continuing Care , please feel free to reach out to Steven Hirsch & Associates for assistance.**

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