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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



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EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Wolf Administration Announces New Support for Long-Term Care Facilities**

**Harrisburg, PA** – The Wolf Administration today announced a new initiative to help long-term care facilities respond to COVID-19 and improve resiliency.

The Long-Term Care Resiliency, Infrastructure Supports, and Empowerment program ([LTC RISE](#)) gives long-term care facilities the support they need to battle COVID-19, recover, and rebuild.

“The challenges of caring for our most vulnerable populations in a congregate setting while managing the threat of COVID-19 creates extremely challenging and stressful circumstances,” Acting Secretary of Health Keara Klinepeter said. “While we are grateful for the efforts of those on the front lines in long-term care facilities, they need more than our gratitude.”

A federal grant provided by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is funding the LTC RISE initiative which began operation on Jan. 1, 2022, replacing the Regional Congregate Care Assistance Teams (RCATs), whose contract expired Dec. 31, 2021.

“Our long-term care facilities provide a caring home for some of our most vulnerable loved ones. As they continue to work through the ongoing public health threat, we must sustain resources that have helped facility leadership, staff, and residents maintain safe operations,” said Human Services Acting Secretary Meg Snead. “We are committed to supporting our long-term care facilities through what lies ahead, and LTC RISE will continue the infrastructure that makes prevention and effective response to health risks in long-term care facilities like COVID-19 possible.”

With LTC RISE, long-term care facilities, which include skilled nursing facilities licensed by the Department of Health (DOH) along with personal care homes, assisted living residences and other facilities licensed by the Department of Human Services (DHS), may take advantage of improvement project opportunities in the following areas:

- Implementing infection prevention and control and emergency preparedness best practices to enhance delivery of resident-centered care,
- Building a sustainable outbreak response operation construct that meets the facility’s needs, and
- Promoting professional development and a resilient long-term care facility workforce.

“Long-term care facilities face unique challenges during a disease outbreak,” said Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency Director Randy Padfield. “Providing a wide range of support options that meet their needs allows them the flexibility to support their staff and clients in a way that makes sense for each facility.”

LTC RISE will continue to offer the following RCAT prevention and response support to LTC RISE-eligible facilities:

- A dedicated phone line with 24/7 access, including designated office hours, for inquiries, consultations, and follow-up calls from long-term care facilities, and
- Consultation and technical assistance, assessment and feedback, training, and incident management coaching.

In addition, facilities are encouraged to procure resources independently through the commercial market as part of their sustainable outbreak operations, however, when barriers or limitations exist, testing support, PPE, and staff augmentation remain available from the commonwealth.

“The public health crises of both dementia and COVID-19 make actions like the LTC RISE initiative all the more necessary in ensuring residents in long-term care facilities remain safe, healthy and protected, especially since nearly half are living with Alzheimer’s or other dementia,” said Jen Ebersole, Director of State Government Affairs for the Alzheimer’s Association. “Continued collaboration among state government entities, advocacy organizations, health care providers, and many others in the commonwealth, has the potential to significantly and positively impact the lives of those living with dementia and we look forward to being part of these discussions moving forward.”

The LTC RISE program is a partnership among DOH, DHS, PEMA and the following healthcare organizations that have established partnerships covering six regions across Pennsylvania to support preventive and emergent assistance for LTCFs:

- Penn Medicine in partnership with Temple Health
- The Pennsylvania State University
- LECOM Health
- AMI Expeditionary Healthcare

More information about the LTC RISE initiative is available online [here](#).

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