

NH Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)  
Division of Long Term Supports and Services

105 Pleasant St.  
Concord, NH 03301

| <b>STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE<br/>DLTSS GENERAL MEMORANDUM (GM)</b> |  |
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| <b>DATE:</b>  | April 20, 2020   |
| <b>TO:</b>  | Area Agency Executive Directors, Provider Agencies of Developmental Disabilities, Acquired Brain Disorder Services, Choices for Independence, and Older Americans Act, Office of Client and Legal Services, Christine Tappan, Melissa St. Cyr, Lisa Morris   |
| <b>FROM:</b>  | Deborah Scheetz, Director, Division of Long Term Supports and Services   |
| <b>SIGNATURE:</b>   |  |
| <b>SUBJECT:</b>   | COVID-19 Emergency Guidance #2 April 20, 2020  |
| <b>GM NUMBER:</b>   | 02-20 GM   |
| <b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b>  | April 20, 2020   |
| <b>REGULATORY GUIDANCE:</b>                                     | This memo is a communication tool circulated for informational purposes only. The goal is to provide information and guidance to the individuals to whom it is addressed. The contents of this memo and the information conveyed are subject to change. This communication is not intended to take the place of or alter written law, regulations or rule. |

| <b>MEMORANDUM SUMMARY</b>   |  |
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| The purpose of this memorandum is to:   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide statewide guidance to agencies relative to COVID-19 Emergency testing of providers that are <i>symptomatic</i>.</li> </ul> |  |

Area Agencies, providers that deliver services to people with developmental disabilities and those with acquired brain disorders, and providers that deliver services to individuals through the Choice for Independence waiver and the Older Americans Act, are responsible for daily operations and management of their COVID-19 emergency local responses and are prepared to manage operations during an emergency or other disruption to normal activities.

On April 14, 2020, the Governor and DHHS Division of Public Health indicated that providers who deliver direct support for home, community, or institutional care services shall be tested for COVID-19 if *symptomatic*, and these testing specimens should be sent to the NH Public Health Laboratories. The purpose of this memorandum is for agencies to identify the direct support staff to be prioritized for testing.

**Which workers should be prioritized for testing?**

Direct care service staff are workers that provide direct, in person, long term services in facility based settings as well as in the home and community to individuals receiving services through the Developmental Disabilities, Acquired Brain Disorder, In Home Support, or Choices for Independence Medicaid waivers and the Older Americans Act. These staff may be known as personal care assistants, caregivers, home health or personal care

aides, or direct service providers. The title of staff is not determinative and, but rather the direct in person nature of service provision dictates those staff in this category.

Only above-noted providers that are *exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID 19* shall be prioritized for testing.

**How does the agency support prioritized testing?**

For each worker described above who is exhibiting any signs of COVID 19, the agency employing said worker shall provide them with a letter to present to their health care provider, or ConvenientMD, that includes the following information:

- This letter certifies that \_\_\_\_\_ [Insert employee name] is a direct care provider in a home, community, or facility based setting, who qualifies for prioritized COVID-19 testing. Attached please find a NH Public Health Laboratories Clinical Laboratory Test Requisition. This employee is deemed a “Health Care Worker” for terms of this Test Requisition, and said Lab test shall be forwarded to the NH Public Health Laboratory with the Health Care Worker line checked.

The link to the Public Health Laboratories Test Requisition can be found here:

<https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/lab/documents/labrequisition.pdf>