

NHPCO Advocates for Consistent COVID Vaccine and Testing Requirements for Health Workers

The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO), today issued the following statement from NHPCO President and CEO, Edo Banach:

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA, US, August 23, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- "The health and safety of our frontline workers and the patients, families, and communities they serve have always been and always will be the highest priority for [NHPCO](#) and hospice and palliative care providers across the nation.



“Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, NHPCO has worked with the government to advance COVID vaccines and testing for hospice and palliative care staff and volunteers, to ensure that care for patients and their families can continue safely. Last week, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced it will require staff working in Medicare and Medicaid-participating nursing homes to be vaccinated against COVID-19. While the move to mandatory vaccinations for these frontline health workers will help protect patients, the current policy does not go far enough. To protect all Americans and give everyone the confidence to seek the healthcare they need, all health workers and volunteers in all settings—including home health, home hospice, and

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Edo Banach

home palliative care workers—should be required to be vaccinated against and regularly tested for COVID-19, with exemptions for medical and religious reasons.

“Today, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) granted full approval for the Pfizer-BioNTech coronavirus vaccine, providing greater certainty around vaccines for all Americans. Similarly, announcing a national requirement for healthcare workers to be vaccinated would provide greater certainty for the healthcare sector. The requirement should include a clear timeline and

implementation should be supported with financial resources, including but not limited to additional support under the Provider Relief Fund and sufficient home-based rapid testing supplies.

“In addition to optimizing public health and safety, uniform, mandatory vaccinations for health workers would help improve public confidence in the healthcare system and help to address staffing challenges. We recognize that shortages of healthcare workers have created intense competition between employers, which has led to further shortages in some communities and healthcare settings. At the same time, employer vaccine requirements have frustrated some health workers. We realize that a national vaccine mandate may cause further frustration in the short term, and we are concerned about that. However, taking the long view, it’s clear that consistent requirements will strengthen public trust in the healthcare system and help stabilize staffing. A clear, nationwide approach, appropriately resourced, would provide the structure and certainty healthcare providers need in order to continue making progress on getting staff vaccinated.

“NHPCO looks forward to working with its colleagues and CMS to support the development and appropriate implementation of consistent requirements for healthcare providers, workers, and volunteers across the country to ensure the safety of the American people—particularly our most vulnerable populations—and to help stabilize the healthcare workforce.”

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[About NHPCO](#)

As the leading organization representing integrated, person-centered healthcare, NHPCO gives ongoing inspiration, practical guidance, and legislative representation to hospice and palliative care providers so they can enrich experiences for patients and ease caregiving responsibilities and emotional stress for families.

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