

Important Message to Our Nursing Homes: Please Report Your Bed Availability

October 14, 2021

To: LeadingAge Wisconsin Nursing Facility Leaders
From: John Sauer, President/CEO

Subject: Please Participate in the EMResource (DHS Bed Reporting System)

I am writing to personally ask for your direct assistance.

My request is for your organization, if it is not already doing so, to report using the State's EMResource system whether your nursing facility is able to accept admissions, and to report this information at least once per week.

The EMResource system only requires you to enter answers two questions: Do you have bed availability?—Yes or No; and If Yes, how many admissions could you (potentially) accept?

Why should you use your precious staff time to report this information?

- Our entire health and long-term care system is challenged by the workforce crisis and the pandemic. Using the EMResource will connect hospitals seeking post-acute care placements for their patients with nursing facilities that are open for admissions. Nursing facilities remain in control over the admissions process. This is a win-win situation for all providers.
- The Department of Health Service's Secretary has directly asked LeadingAge Wisconsin to encourage its member nursing facilities to report bed availability via the EMResource system. As a reminder, the DHS Secretary was especially helpful in directing her staff to allocate an additional \$18 million to further increase nursing home

rate increases, effective July 1, 2021 (The average rate increase is nearly 15%). DHS is monitoring our reporting progress. Let's be good partners and report as requested by DHS.

- Some hospital representatives have implied that nursing facilities are not being good partners in working with hospitals to address the backlog of hospitals patients in need of post-acute care placement. Some have even called for modifications to the nursing home bed moratorium and related steps to allow hospitals greater access to nursing home care. Of course, what you fully understand is that the LTC workforce challenge is often the primary factor driving a nursing facility's decision to stop or otherwise limit admissions. In addition, there are some hospital patients that are not appropriate for nursing home placement; for example, those requiring 1:1 staffing due to complex behavioral conditions. Having all nursing facilities report bed availability will help document the challenges nursing homes face in admitting hospital patients and aid our efforts to educate decisionmakers more fully on the how the workforce crisis and pandemic are impacting the long-term care system.

I know asking you to do more comes at a time when you and your team are already pushed beyond any definition of what is reasonable. However, my judgment is that your ongoing participation in the EMResource system will prove helpful to you and your organization and greatly assist LeadingAge Wisconsin in its advocacy efforts on your behalf. **So, please help us help you by having your nursing facility report bed availability via the EMResource system.** Ideally, this should be done daily, but at least weekly and whenever there is a change in your bed availability at your facility (see information below).

Should you need any more information on the EMResource system or have other any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at jsauer@leadingagewi.org or 608-444-9295.

THANK YOU!

EMResource System Guidance for Nursing Homes:

- Here is the DHS memo on the EMResource system, including user instructions: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/dph/memos/communicable-diseases/2021-06.pdf>.

- Please submit your bed availability information at least weekly; or more frequently if your bed and admission availability changes.
- Although not required, you may want to use the Comment section under the EMResource to provide further information to hospitals. For example, if your nursing facility does not have beds available, you may want to explain; e.g., "limiting admissions due to staffing challenges." The Comment section could also be used to inform the hospital on the types of patients you are not able to admit at this time; e.g., "Our facility is not able to admit persons requiring peritoneal dialysis, infusion therapy or persons requiring 1:1 staffing." If these comments reflect ongoing circumstances, feel free to "cut and paste" your comments with each EMResource response (again, at least weekly).



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