

AARP WI: New analysis shows COVID-19 cases declining in Wisconsin nursing homes

Posted on Thursday, Feb 11, 2021

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

Contact: Jim Flaherty, Communications Director
Office 608/ 286-6308 – Cell 608/ 698-0928, jflaherty@aarp.org

MADISON – While the latest release of AARP's Nursing Home COVID-19 Dashboard shows significant incremental improvements in the number of deaths and new infections in Wisconsin's nursing homes, AARP warns that now is not the time for these facilities to let their guard down. From Dec. 21 to Jan. 17, the rate of coronavirus cases per 100 nursing home residents declined almost by half among residents and staff compared to the previous month. The number of cases dropped from 9.9 per 100 residents in the four-week period ending Dec. 20 to 5.1 cases per 100 in the four-week period ending Jan. 17.

During the same time period, the rate of new nursing home staff COVID-19 cases dropped from 10.3 per 100 nursing home residents to 6.0.

Deaths in Wisconsin nursing homes also dropped by nearly half when comparing data from Dec. 21 to Jan. 17 with the previous four-week period. Deaths dropped from 2.70 per 100 residents in the month leading up to Dec. 20 to 1.36 per 100 in the latest dashboard.

Shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE) have decreased slightly over the same period, from 34.6% of Wisconsin nursing homes without at least a one-week supply in December to 27.2% in January.

Meanwhile, staffing shortages are improving but remain a persistent problem, with 39.7% of facilities reporting a shortage in the most recent dashboard, which is down from 43.4% in the previous four-week period.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, more than 150,000 lives have been lost in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities, and nearly 1.3 million people are known to have been infected with coronavirus in these facilities.

AARP has been urging Governor Evers and state lawmakers to protect nursing home residents and staff from COVID-19.

“The dashboard data over the last two months of 2020 painted a very dire picture for our nursing homes in WI with accelerating numbers of cases and deaths throughout the state,” said AARP Wisconsin State Director Sam Wilson. “At that time, we pleaded with everyone in our communities to redouble our health and safety efforts and prioritize the vaccination process for our vulnerable nursing home residents. Today’s nursing home dashboard release is proof positive that combination is working and working in a big way in Wisconsin.”

While the latest data is showing that Wisconsin is moving in the right direction, Wilson said the number of cases and deaths in these facilities is still high. He said, “now is not the time to let down our guard”. He also said policy leaders should not take away the rights of residents to hold nursing homes accountable when they fail to provide adequate care

The AARP Nursing Home COVID-19 Dashboard analyzes federally reported data in four-week periods going back to June 1, 2020.

Using this data, the AARP Public Policy Institute, in collaboration with the Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University in Ohio, created the dashboard to provide snapshots of the virus’s infiltration into nursing homes and impact on nursing home residents and staff, with the goal of identifying specific areas of concern at the national and state levels in a timely manner.

The Dashboard is available at www.aarp.org/nursinghomedashboard . For more information on how COVID is impacting nursing homes and AARP’s advocacy on this issue, visit www.aarp.org/nursinghomes