

# AHCA/NCAL: Nursing Homes See 82 Percent Decline In COVID Cases Indicating The Vaccines Are Working

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**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – The American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL), representing more than 14,000 nursing homes and long term care facilities across the country that provide care to approximately five million people each year, released a [report](#) today showing nursing homes in the U.S. have seen the lowest number of new COVID cases since the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) started tracking back in May 2020, suggesting that the vaccines are working.

Recent CMS data shows that nursing homes have seen an 82 percent decline in new COVID cases among residents since the peak during the week of December 20 of last year when there were more than 30,000 new resident cases. In the same period of time, community cases in the general population dropped by 46 percent, showcasing that vaccines are having an impact in protecting the elderly population in nursing homes.

“We still have a long road ahead, but these numbers are incredibly encouraging and a major morale booster for frontline caregivers who have been working tirelessly every day for a year to protect our residents,” said Mark Parkinson, president and CEO of AHCA/NCAL. “This new data showcases just how important it is for nursing homes residents and staff, as well as the general public, to get the vaccine because it is clearly working.”

The report also shows cases have dropped to the lowest level since CMS started

tracking weekly COVID cases in nursing homes last May.

Along with the lowest number of new COVID cases, new data also shows COVID related deaths in nursing homes declined by 63 percent since December 20, 2020.

“Though this report brings hope, we cannot let our guard down. We must continue to encourage folks to get vaccinated, especially caregivers and staff,” added Parkinson. “Public health officials must also continue to ensure that long term care residents and staff remain the highest priority for accessing the vaccine, as the on-site clinics with CVS, Walgreens and other pharmacy partners are coming to a close.

“Most importantly, we call on the Administration to review its current guidance to nursing homes on restricting visitors and group activities,” concluded Parkinson. “With millions of residents and caregivers now fully protected thanks to the vaccines, residents must be able to safely reengage in meaningful activities and be reunited with their loved ones.”

In December, AHCA/NCAL launched [#GetVaccinated](#), a nationwide campaign that aimed at encouraging all long term care residents, families and staff members to consent to the vaccine as well as provide credible information to help inform their decision. Last week, AHCA/NCAL also [announced](#) the nationwide goal of getting 75 percent of all long term staff vaccinated by June 30, 2021.