

Project Nursing Home ECHO

Program Information

What is Project Nursing Home ECHO?

Project Nursing Home ECHO is a national program that is meant to give nursing home healthcare workers access to subject matter experts and peers to expand their knowledge in infection control and quality improvement regardless of their geographical location or other barriers. Project Nursing Home ECHO participants will have a chance to work with their cohort peers to develop best practices and discuss particular issues related to COVID-19 within their facilities. The weekly meetings are meant to be a case based discussion on relevant issues with a short structured lecture on infection control content. Ultimate goal is for each nursing home to have their own COVID-19 experts who will inform policies and practices related to COVID-19 prevention and mitigation. The project is expected to launch in mid-September 2020.

AHRQ is partnering with the ECHO institute to bring this program to nursing homes as was announced in the recent press release by HHS (see the section on “Training and Mentoring for Nursing Homes” at the following link: <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2020/08/27/trump-administration-announces-2-5-billion-to-nursing-homes-for-covid-19-relief-funding.html>) Some funding will also be available for nursing homes to cover the cost of staff training time.

How does ECHO Model™ facilitate learning?

The ECHO Model™ uses adult learning techniques and interactive video technology to facilitate case-based learning and mentorship that helps healthcare workers gain the expertise required to provide needed services. Visit <https://echo.unm.edu/> to learn more about the ECHO Model™.

How will Nursing Home Project ECHO work?

Many ECHO hubs across the country will use the ECHO Model™ to provide COVID-19 prevention and mitigation training for nursing home healthcare workers. Division of Infectious Diseases at University of Nebraska Medical Center will also be one of the hubs for this project in Nebraska. Project ECHO participants will commit to 16 weekly meetings of about 90 minutes that will include a cohort of 34 nursing homes. Each nursing home will nominate 3 to 4 healthcare workers (medical directors, nurses and other professionals interested in getting involved in quality improvement activities) to attend these weekly meetings. There will be a curriculum for COVID-19 that will be followed and weekly meetings will have brief (15 to 20 minute) lectures. Participants will be asked to bring forward cases/scenarios that they may be dealing with to discuss with their peers and subject matter experts. After the initial 16 week commitment, weekly meetings will continue for the rest of the year and are optional.

The Project ECHO Hub multidisciplinary team will be responsible for scheduling sessions, collecting cases/challenging scenarios for the sessions, gathering recommendations and reporting these recommendations out to the facilities that are participating.

What are Project ECHO Goals?

Project ECHO is meant to create a network of subject matter experts in all nursing homes. This utilizes an “all teach, all learn” approach to foster collaboration and discussion surrounding COVID-19-related issues that facilities are dealing with on a daily basis. The specific goals of the Project Nursing Home ECHO are:

1. Give facilities resources and knowledge to prevent infectious diseases from getting into the facility.
2. Give facilities resources and knowledge to prevent the spread of infectious diseases within the facility.
3. Give facilities resources and knowledge to provide the best care for residents that are positive for COVID-19.
4. Give facilities resources and knowledge to provide adequate staff protection to prevent the spread of infectious disease within the staff.
5. Give facilities resources and knowledge to provide a safe environment for visitors, either clinical or non-clinical.

What is required of the participating facility?

1. Commitment to at least the first 16 weeks of Project ECHO 90 minute sessions
 - a. Certificate of completion is available for facilities that attend a total of 35 ECHO sessions throughout the year, including the initial 16 weeks of training
2. Selection of Project ECHO site champions that will be available to attend ECHO sessions and assist the facility with implementing recommendations
3. Case submissions for discussion during the ECHO sessions
 - a. Cases do not have to be patient based, they can be situational or policy based
 - b. These are discussion topics that your facility would like input from subject matter experts and others that are on the ECHO sessions
4. Resources to join virtual meetings
 - a. Computer, webcam, microphone and speakers
 - b. Internet connection

For additional information and reserving a spot for your nursing home:

Please reach out to:

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