

HOME CARE 100®

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Home Care 100 Coronavirus Task Force Executive Summary – Call #6

COVID Management: Crisis & Beyond

April 21, 2020

Through complimentary **Home Care 100 Coronavirus Task Force** conference calls with top experts and providers, we offer best practices in **Coronavirus crisis management** and **forward-thinking insights into the “new normal”**: how best to operate in the next 12-18 months, before a vaccine is developed.

This week, providers outlined key learnings to date along with an outlook of what lies ahead – in terms of crisis management as well as the role of home care in the greater evolving healthcare landscape.

Featured Contributors:

Darby Anderson, EVP and CDO, Addus Home Care

David Causby, President & CEO, Kindred at Home

Scott Gasset, EVP/Chief Innovation & Business Development Officer, Stratum Health System

Mike Johnson, Practice President - Home Health, BAYADA Home Health Care

Andrew Molosky, President & CEO, Chapters Health System

Jim Robinson, CEO, CareFinders Total Care

Kerin Zuger, Chief of Strategic Growth, Right at Home

Key Learnings

Overview

As the coronavirus curve begins to flatten, the degree to which COVID-19 has disrupted the home care sector is starting to emerge, including large-scale challenges as well as new windows of opportunity. This week, providers outlined key learnings to date along with an outlook of what lies ahead – in terms of crisis management as well as the role of home care in the greater evolving healthcare landscape.

PPE Still a Major Challenge

Infection fears surrounding COVID-19 continue to impact PPE usage and procurement. PPE needs have expanded to include coverage for all patients regardless of CV status, as well as for the entire workforce, whether providing care in home or in a facility. **David Causby** (Kindred at Home) expressed his concern that home care agencies are low on the priority list for FEMA and other agencies, and sees this as the biggest challenge on multiple levels. In many cases, the lack of PPE is the only hurdle to providing post-acute care and is expected to become a common requirement for personal care going forward.

Newly Complicated Staffing Logistics

Darby Anderson (Addus Home Care) cited logistic challenges with staffing as an obstacle Addus is navigating: “The combination of less demand, as well as less supply at the same time...how we fill the

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services for the clients that do want them has been an ongoing challenge.” Interim plans are required to manage the capacity now (admissions down ~10%) and keep workforce in reserve and ready to be engaged when necessary - without the benefit of knowing when demand will resume. Strategies include: investing in the workforce with additional hazard pay and strategic scheduling to mitigate outages; actively seeking talent from the growing pool of unemployed workers displaced by other industries; leveraging a strong culture by engaging employees in figuring out how to avoid furloughs and redeploy staff; providing creative staff support such as facilitating access to groceries and household paper products to improve employee satisfaction and ease stress.

Communication as a Key Component in the Tool Box

To mitigate fear among staff and community, heavy communication across as many avenues as possible continues to yield the greatest impact. **Kerin Zuger** (Right at Home) suggested bringing in experts such as financial, legal, clinical, and even fulfillment, to address staff concerns and provide additional support. Industry leaders emphasize the importance of showcasing home care commitment and competence across all segments to the healthcare community at large, not just as relates to COVID, but to all chronically ill and frail clients.

Augmenting Care Delivery Models

Re-evaluating clinical delivery models for both CV and non-CV patients has resulted in new protocols, including more intensive upfront admission assessments, comprehensive education plans, and increased use of technology as means to monitor and provide training/therapy remotely. Providers are working with CMS to recognize this as a valuable billable service. **Andrew Molosky** (Chapters Health System) noted that the days of simply getting a referral from a discharge planner and processing a care plan are gone. “With the furthering of technology in medicine, the increasing sparsity of qualified care givers, and the risk dollar demanding more for less, the home setting is the most cost effective and patient preferential. COVID19 continues to widen the chasm between those providers who are capable of adapting their business model to a quality not quantity driven one and those that are not.”

The Pursuit of Emerging Opportunities

Psychological shifts are enabling providers to explore new avenues: Infection fears are encouraging seniors to embrace technology they previously resisted, and in this environment, the heightened need for telemedicine may facilitate ongoing reimbursement. **Mike Johnson** (BAYADA Home Health Care) remarked on the role the media is playing in the perception of hospitals and SNFs, resulting in people avoiding both. With readmission rates going down, BAYADA is tracking outcomes of patients going back to the hospital versus those going home, with an eye toward demonstrating capability in handling higher

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acuity needs. **Scott Gassett** (Stratum Health System) views the current stigma people associate with LTC and hospitals prompting deeper investigation of other feasible care options, potentially driving hospice to a consumer-driven model. Concurrently, the mindset toward advanced care directives has shifted, stimulating a surge in palliative access.

Jim Robinson (CareFinders Total Care) observed the rapid and effective shift from branch-based to remote operations revealed the potential for cost savings associated with reduction in real estate. He further noted that live-in and family care models may prove to be more stable than the hourly model over the long term, as he has noticed less fear-related interruption of care since family is already there. He expects to see more variety in in structurally managed Medicaid beyond the hourly model moving forward. Concern was expressed by **Darby Anderson** regarding Medicaid funding as tax revenues are down and state budgets are stressed. However, many providers view the current situation with private and Managed Care payors as an opportunity to increase rates and renegotiate contracts with unfavorable terms.

■ [Home Care 100 COVID-19 Business Planning & Crisis Management Resources](#)

To receive an invitation to participate in task force calls, please contact:
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2020/2021 Conferences

[HI²](#)
November 1-2, 2020
(NEW DATES)
Westin Chicago River North

[Senior Care 360](#)
December 9-10, 2020
(NEW DATES)
Gaylord Resort, MD

[Home Care 100](#)
January 24-27, 2021
JW Marriott Marco Island, FL