




Thursday  
~~Wednesday~~ Insights



By David Ellis, SNF Analyst

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***Covid third wave is accelerating!*** Not only is Covid growing, but its growth rate is still growing. Last week's average new daily case rate growth was up 43% from 14 days earlier. Monday, November 10, it was up by 69% from 14 days earlier! We are now seeing an average of 123,315 new cases a day. Hospitalizations and deaths are also growing. We had 1,448 new deaths on November 10.

Expect this wave to get much worse nationally. Also in your state, unless you see people meaningfully change their social distancing and infection control behavior.

### Report From Indianapolis — An In-Person LTC 100 Conference

About 100 hardy executives from leading providers and solution partners came together for LTC 100 this week in downtown Indianapolis, the first major conference to be held in our sector since last spring. Covid-safety measures infused this experience, so it was anything but typical: attendees were tested twice (rapid antigen test), wore masks and practiced social distancing – and no spouse program or luxury experience typical of LTC 100. Nonetheless, it felt wonderful to get together again, talk in person, emote, share and commiserate. And a lot of commiserating was certainly done! What a tough, sobering time it is today for SNF operators.

The program was focused, as you might expect, on Covid. **The two biggest challenges on everyone's mind? Census and staffing.** And no easy solutions for either. But there were many shared operational learnings, some silver linings, and a sense that after we make it through this massive storm there will be renewal in long-term care. We will be discussing more LTC 100 learnings in next week's newsletter, but for now, here are some quick take-aways from the conference.

#### Top 15 Ideas from the 2020 LTC 100 Conference:

**1. Rewrite our narrative.** Don't just accept the media-driven negative image of SNFs. Ramp up our use of social media, especially on Facebook. Orchestrate a company-wide campaign to promote our positive stories of recovering Covid patients and heroic staff efforts. Generate positive press. Spread the good news to our residents' families, the general public, referral sources, and our staff.

**2. Elevate the use of geriatric physicians and nurse practitioners in our buildings.** Acuity in SNFs is going up. This is a key source of census growth and we've got to be able to capably handle this increased acuity.

**3. Buy distressed SNF competitors — and shut them down.** Expect quite a bit of “wreckage” ahead. Capitalize on it - buy them, in some cases teaming up with another competitor, and grow your census that way. Also, inherit the competitor's staff.

**4. Add a dialysis unit.** They can be very profitable, grow your census, limit Covid infection risk and get you closer with hospitals.

**5. Move into home health, hospice and AL/IL.** The SNF sector will shrink. Move into adjacent sectors. Not easy, but long term this is smart. Go where the growth is, and as value-based care expands you can be a full continuum player to actually do longitudinal care management across settings.

**6. Staffing.** Challenge ourselves to find ways to get staff more engaged. Can staff get involved with creating resident activities? Promote us on social media? Solve isolation challenges?

**7. CNA training.** Lobby your states hard to enable us to quickly train temporary CNAs into permanent CNAs. Having a viable pipeline of new CNAs is critical for SNFs to recover our census.

**8. Culture.** Redouble our efforts at becoming a great place to work. Turnover is arguably the key metric that will separate winners from losers in this pandemic. A great culture “inoculates” your organization from high turnover.

**9. Partner with home health for more referrals.** Home health has the odd situation today of getting more consumer-driven volume than they can capably handle. A home health partner can help you convince patient families that you need to start in the SNF before going to home health.

**10. Contact your state to get lists of frail Medicaid eligibles.** Contact them on behalf of the state and inform them of the HCBS available to them, including long term care (and you!). Also works for managed Medicaid – volunteer to call the plans' beneficiaries on their behalf and inform them of your services, too.

**11. Zoom dining.** Pair up your residents with volunteers to have a Zoom dining experience. Helps reduce isolation and makes a good story for the press.

**12. SNF Covid liability exposure – not so bad as you might think.** More on this from us next week.

**13. Seek help from your private equity owners, REIT landlords, or lenders.** Can they help you not only with financial obligations but also with public image or census growth?

**14. Conceptually reframe Covid.** Out of every big crisis comes opportunities. What are your opportunities? New strategy. New branding. New staffing. New operational processes.

**15. Vaccine.** Pfizer news is promising! When it does come out, we will be among the

very first in the U.S. to get it. Take advantage of the opportunity window when it comes to brand our SNFs as the safest place for seniors in America.

If you have any comments on this week's content, or ideas for next week, let me know at [dellis@lincolnhc.com](mailto:dellis@lincolnhc.com) -David Ellis, SNF Analyst



To be connected with other members of the LTC 100 Intelligence Group community, please email [Cathy Ronca](mailto:Cathy.Ronca@lincolnhc.com), SNF Analyst



## Upcoming Events

**Thursday, November 19 Think Tank Video Call**  
**3:00 - 4:00 PM EST**

### **Fresh Ideas to Solve the Staffing Shortage**

Staffing is arguably the single biggest challenge facing skilled nursing providers. We're canvassing SNFs, senior living and home care providers to present the freshest recruitment and retention ideas brewing across senior care.

[Register](#)

The LTC 100 Intelligence Group is a membership community of leading SNF providers and solution partners whose goal is to help create exceptional performance for its members. Members benefit from original healthcare intelligence and a concierge-connected community.

Contact [Chris Babbidge](#) for a complimentary trial membership.

*Creating Exceptional Performance*

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