



April 19, 2021

## **ARP Funding for One Time Projects to Support Michigan's Nursing Facilities**

**Fund Name: Nursing Facility Fund - COVID and Infectious Diseases**

Congress and President Biden recently approved the American Rescue Plan (ARP) to address the adverse impacts of COVID-19 across sectors of the economy and state and local governments. As the nursing facility profession has been severely impacted by the pandemic, it would be prudent to use a portion of these resources to support and improve Michigan's nursing facilities and the residents for whom they provide care.

To achieve this funds should be used to develop a financial support program for nursing facilities to continue addressing the COVID-19 virus along with other infectious diseases through one-time structural and operational improvements. The program is designed to allow nursing facilities to make changes tailored to their specific circumstances. Eligible expenses are goods which are installed, operational, and put in service, and services that are received for these purposes, starting March 1, 2020, through December 31, 2022.

### ***Funding:***

The program will allocate funds to support reimbursement for projects that improve the ability to respond to and prevent infectious diseases such as COVID-19 in nursing facilities. Each provider would be required to request funds from the overall projects, with a cap of \$250,000 per facility. The fund would total \$110 million to support these projects. Potential eligible projects are detailed below. These projects can be easily implemented, effectively address many of the issues presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, and will provide a benefit to Michigan nursing facility residents for decades to come.

### ***Potential Projects:***

#### ***COVID-19 Indoor Air Quality Assistance***

**Description:** COVID-19 Indoor Air Quality Assistance allows facilities to receive reimbursement for inspections, assessments, maintenance, and/or improvements to indoor heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems to control the spread of the novel coronavirus COVID-19.

**Purpose:** The program provides assistance to improve indoor air quality through ventilation and filtration in facilities serving older Michiganders to reduce potential spread of infection due to COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. Facilities that qualify can use funds for eligible inspections, assessments, maintenance, and improvements to Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems for both installed and portable solutions.

**Cost:** HCAM estimates the cost of this program to total \$25 million.

### Convert Nursing Home Wards to Semi-Private or Private Rooms

*Description:* Provide financial assistance to nursing homes to convert three and four bed wards to private or semi-private rooms. This will allow for the provision of a more homelike and private environment along with limiting the spread of infectious diseases including COVID-19.

*Purpose:* To assist nursing facilities to restructure their bed configurations to eliminate all rooms with three or more residents per room. Michigan has about 154 facilities with wards for 3 to 4 residents in a single space. The facility would be able to seek funding for the following circumstances: converting these rooms to semi and single occupancy, spreading the rooms out into a new addition and a payment for releasing the beds permanently for purposes of the CON bed inventory. Studies have shown that the spread of COVID-19 occurred at a higher rate in larger facilities with less private rooms. This program would be especially helpful for residents in Detroit and other urban facilities around the state.

*Cost:* Will vary depending on structural changes/buyback program.

### Establish Negative Air Pressure Rooms

*Description:* Provide funding for a nursing facility to incorporate structural changes to create negative air pressure rooms specifically used to control spread of infectious diseases. The facility would be limited to a maximum of two negative air pressure rooms. The rooms will need to be developed from the existing beds in the facility and would not require Certificate of Need approval.

*Purpose:* Establish negative air pressure rooms in nursing facilities to keep residents with infectious diseases from spreading into non-contaminated areas. These rooms can control the quantity and quality of the air being put out into other parts of the facility.

*Cost:* HCAM estimates this cost to be approximately \$100,000 per room.

### Create Facility Isolation Wings

*Description:* Creation of isolation areas in nursing facilities to create a safer environment to control the spread of infectious diseases including COVID-19 throughout the building. The area would have designated staff, donning and doffing area, barriers to limit transmission and other structural changes to accommodate this area.

*Purpose:* Provide an established “safe” area to use for isolation of residents that have an infectious disease or in need of quarantine to control spread. This would limit exposure of the disease to other residents, staff and visitors.

*Cost:* Will vary depending on needs of each specific facility.

### Technology for Improving Infection Control

*Description:* Access to technology that enhances a nursing facility’s ability to minimize the spread of infectious diseases through improved cleaning methods, screening all entries to a facility and other devices that have been created for this purpose. This can include: foggers, UV lights, entry screening devices, electronic thermometers, and other devices that are available.

**Purpose:** To improve a nursing facilities efforts in controlling the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases through the utilization of new technology to sanitize and clean a facility along with monitoring those who enter the building for any reason.

**Cost:** Costs will vary depending on technology.

### *Create Dialysis Dens*

**Description:** Provide funding to create a specific area or room within the facility to provide in-home dialysis for current nursing facility residents. The area would be designed in accordance with Medicare regulations and guidance for in-home dialysis.

**Purpose:** This service will provide the nursing facility resident with a better dialysis experience by being able to use the “dialysis den” within the facility, instead of having to travel to a dialysis center outside the facility for treatment. By allowing residents to receive dialysis treatment in the building they call home, they will avoid potential exposure to COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. During the pandemic, dialysis patients were even more isolated than other residents as quarantine was required for 14 days after every visit out of the facility. Dialysis dens would alleviate this problem.

Structural changes are needed to modify the dialysis area which will likely serve 3-6 residents at a time. The facility would need to contract with a dialysis center to provide the care and to bill the appropriate insurer including Medicare.

**Cost:** \$80,000 - \$120,000 per room