

Pandemic inspires framework for enhanced care in nursing homes

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As of May 2020, nursing home residents account for a staggering one-third of the more than 80,000 deaths due to COVID-19 in the U.S. This pandemic has resulted in unprecedented threats—like reduced access to resources needed to contain and eliminate the spread of the virus—to achieving and sustaining care quality even in the best nursing homes. Active engagement of nursing home leaders in developing solutions responsive to the unprecedented threats to quality standards of care delivery is required.

In an article published in the *Journal of Aging and Social Policy*, two researchers from the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing (Penn Nursing) offer a framework, designed with the input of nursing home leaders, to facilitate internal and external decision-making and [collective action](#) to address these threats.

"Nursing [home residents](#) are arguably the most vulnerable population to the human devastation wrought by this pandemic. Nursing home leaders cannot be left ' . . . alone in this battle' in providing residents with the quality of care they need and

deserve," write the authors Liza L. Behrens Ph.D., RN, a post-doctoral research fellow at the NewCourtland Center for Transitions and Health and Mary D. Naylor, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, the Marian S. Ware Professor in Gerontology and the Director of the NewCourtland Center. "Our framework provides a path for nursing home leaders to guide [quality assurance](#), informed decision-making, and collaboration and coordination among governmental agencies and key stakeholders during adverse events like COVID-19."

The article outlines the framework, which provides an ethically sound path forward to better position nursing home leaders and their teams to achieve these goals. The article also offers ideas for its use by [decision-makers](#), both internal and external to nursing homes, and suggests policy opportunities to advance widespread use of this roadmap to assure acceptable levels of care quality throughout and beyond COVID-19.

More information: Liza L. Behrens et al, "We are Alone in This Battle": A Framework for a Coordinated Response to COVID-19 in Nursing Homes, *Journal of Aging & Social Policy* (2020). [DOI: 10.1080/08959420.2020.1773190](https://doi.org/10.1080/08959420.2020.1773190)

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