



**Division of Provider Services  
and Quality Assurance  
Office of Long Term Care**

<http://humanservices.arkansas.gov/dms/Pages/oltcHome.aspx>

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LTC-2021-01

**MEMORANDUM**

TO:  Nursing Facilities;  ICFs/MR 16 Bed & Over;  HDCs;  
 ICFs/MR Under 16 Beds;  Interested Parties;  DHS County Office  
*Melody Jones Blackwell*

FROM: Melody Jones Blackwell, Director, Office of Long-Term Care

DATE: January 28, 2021

RE: Advisory Memo – Tuberculosis (TB) Testing

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The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) released new guidance received from the CDC (01/07/2021) which is attached to this memorandum recommending new testing procedures in light of, shortage of tuberculosis (TB) testing materials, the emergence of COVID-19 and the COVID-19 vaccines.

Due to the changes in CDC guidelines, proposed changes to rules regarding TB testing, and that the CDC has declared a shortage of Purified Protein Derivative (PPD) solution for administering the TB Skin Test (TST), OLTC will expect facilities to comply with the latest CDC recommendations.

**EMPLOYEES:**

As stated in the updated CDC guidance, health care workers can now go through a screening process and not automatic testing. While facilities can discontinue the routine testing process, the screening process must continue, and this must be properly documented.

**RESIDENTS:**

The updated guidance from the CDC also documents new guidance related to COVID-19 and TB testing for patients or residents. We understand that there is a nationwide shortage of the testing solution. While this shortage continues, facilities should use the Screening process. If a resident is symptomatic, a blood test may be considered. **Please note that active and latent tuberculosis are reportable to ADH as before. Facilities should ensure proper assessment and treatment options if employees or residents become symptomatic.**

During this shortage, facilities should document assessments of new residents (and existing residents on an annual basis) and document their ongoing communication with their pharmacy or PPD supplier.

For further information contact the Arkansas Department of Health **501-661-2068**.

If you need this material in alternative format such as large print, please contact our Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator at 501-682-8307 (voice) or 501-682-6789 (TDD).

*MJB*

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